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Author's Note

"West Philippine Sea" is the official designation by the Philippine government for eastern parts of the South China Sea that are included in the Philippines' exclusive economic zone. The term is also sometimes incorrectly used to refer to the South China Sea as a whole.



Characters:

- ✧ *Martial Law (M)*
- ✧ *Philippines (M)*
- ✧ *China (M)*
- ✧ *North Korea (M)*
- ✧ *America (M)*
- ✧ *Katipunan (M)*
- ✧ *Gregorio Del Pilar (M)*
- ✧ *Perla (F)*



WEST PHILIPPINE SEA

- Obviously for narration

West Philippine Sea

- Dialogues in other languages; The POV's thought

West Philippine Sea

- Indication of who's POV is on; Strong feelings of the POV's thought

West Philippine Sea

- Narrator's dialogue in the middle of the first person's POV

West Philippine Sea

- Used for indicating a part from a document



Sorry, this took years. OMG. I forgot the whole plot since that day I asked what you know about the West Philippine Sea issue. But hey. I T'S HERE!

Credits to the picture I used in my book cover. The artist is familiar but I'm not sure huhu.

The warnings will be told in the chapters that has things the readers must be warned about.



rinkakashitotoku

I revised (or used?) some of her ideas :D She has her own PART OF YOU book and SURPRISINGLY SHE UPDATED IT-

(Author's note update: Jun 16-22)



☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ 100%

Thank you for the patience...

☐☐➤ Prologue

MANILA PHILIPPINES

- - ☐☐◦☐☐-☐☐◦☐☐ - -

...

"WHAT?!"

"I'm not helping you with China for now."

"But he's already claiming the West Philippine Sea! I need your support!"

"And I'm not sending warships to the sea. China might think I'm starting a war." America puts his hands together, places them on his desk and leans forward. "I never want him to take what's yours too, Philippines, but we cannot force him. Our armies aren't ready to fight against China."

I just can't believe it.

It's been months since China's ships began passing our sea and kidnap or kill my fishermen. I asked America to come over my office for a while and talk about this. I badly want some suggestions from him on what to do because I am too weak against China. My land is too small for a country like him. I needed support.

AND THIS?!

It's just unbelievable. My head hurts at this moment. America is one of the countries that can fight against China. Why does he look so afraid right now?!

"I... want to get rid of him." I repeated my words.

"If China said he wants it, he's gonna get it whatever the cost. And you know what he can do! We were schoolmates back then. He used to punch you-"

"Reminding me of him bullying me won't help me at all, America!" I shouted with my hand slammed on the table. "Such a son of a bitch." I whispered it to myself while leaning back to my chair and looking away.

He was silent for a moment before asking me, "What did you just say?"

"I said the words of anger." I resisted myself from repeating my words. I don't like verbally hurting other people either. "Can you just... leave, America?"

We had a moment of silence first. I heard him clicked his tongue before standing up from his chair and open the door to leave.

"Close the door, please."

"I know." Then, he slammed the door close.

. . .

. . .

*Multiple personality
disorder...*

I massaged my head hoping it would ease the worries I'm having for my country. It is being taken away from me again.

The history might repeat itself again.

*A mental health condition
of having two or more
separate personalities...*

It's been years since the last war we've been. The sound of the cannons and machine guns are still in my head.

America is always making me feel worse! He did remind me of what China did to me back then.

Yes, America. I remember it very well.

It's... painful.

My heart always race when I think of it... and the Spanish Empire... America, himself... The Japanese Empire.

The whip. The elctric chair. The death march.

The blood. The rain. The sea.

The cuts. The bruises. The-

'Republika ng Pilipinas, HOI!'

"Oh! Yes? What? Why?"

That loud call in my head almost make me jump off my seat.

*It is caused by longterm,
recurrent trauma in
childhood - most often
abuse...*

'You are silent.'

"I was just thinking."

'About?'

I cannot tell him I'm thinking about the past again. The last time I did... he took over the control of my arm and slapped my face thrice.

"The West Philippine Sea. I and America just had a talk about it."

'You would talk to me if that's what you're thinking. You would tell me how the talk went or what I think about America.'

Here it comes again. Martial being a wise guesser.

'What if you're thinking about the p-'

"Yes! Yes, I do! *Tama na.*"

*This isn't a demon
possession. Alters aren't
inhuman persons. Alters
can care for each other...*

I heard chuckling in my head. *'I knew it.'*

"You always know a lot, *kuya*."

'Didn't I tell you to cut ties from America?'

I can't say no to Martial because I was close to America for years!
And he hasn't done anything bad to me since he helped me get over
the Japanese invasion. I trusted America with all of my heart. This
day is just different. "Yeah, you do," I just said.

'And why didn't you do it?'

"I... trust him in helping me. I can't believe he'll break his promise
that... he will help me improve."

Suddenly, my arm felt light in weight, floated and my palm was
slapped on my cheek. "Ouw!"

'HAHA! Deserve.'

"You're being a bad brother again. *Papa* will hear about this."

'Woah, woah. Want me to tell him you liked Spain?'

"No! Please, wag. You know how mad he will be if he find out about
that."

'I only gave you a slap on your face to wake you up and it always work!'

I sighed.

I closed my eyes as I rest on my chair. "What should I do, Martial?
China's showing signs that he'll invade us. It makes me worry!"

Seconds have passed before he finally answered. *'Let's befriend him.'*

My eyes opened wide. "WHAT?! NO FUCKING WAY!"

'Befriending him will decrease the chance of him declaring war on us. I think it'll work.'

I put my fingertips together and place them on my lips. "I don't think it's a good idea. It's risky."

*Alters can fall in
love...*

'We can try.'

I clicked my tongue and smiled. "I adore your bravery, *kuya*. I somewhat expect you to suggest that."

'I'm not afraid with anyone, Phil. Ha! If only he knew you have me as your alter, I'll talk to him for you.'

"But according to Vietnam, China is manipulative."

'He is nooooooot. I'm really sure he isn't as good as Russia.'

I sighed again. "Give me time to think about it."

*'Philip, I don't want to see you getting stressed, okay? **We are one** against any invaders of your land.'*

I slightly smiled at what Martial said to me. Having someone who supports me fully give me no worries.

*Yet... having this condition
isn't obvious to everyone...*

The creaking of my door opening put me in shock. Seriously. I panicked that I even lifted up my ass from my chair.

*Changes in the hosts's
actions or speaking
is one of the signs that an
alter takes over...*

A man walked in.

My eyebrows bunched together when I saw the stars on his face. My panic switched into annoyance. He didn't even bother to knock. He didn't even call me before he open the door.

He's so disrespectful! He is on the land of somebody! He didn't know how to act properly!

China. The damn Ching Chong. A pain of my life since high school.

*Stress, strong emotions,
senses and memories
triggers the switching...*

"Ni hao, Fēilùbīn."

His appearance is boiling my blood. He really has a gut to talk in his language and grin at me.

'What? Who's there, Phil?'

I breathe in and raised my chin to show no fear at the man. "China," I said as both an answer to Martial and a call to the man's name.

*So, stay calm when you
witness the person
switch into somebody
else...*

"Can I have a seat?" If only rolling eyes isn't a big deal, I would do it. How dare he to ask me if he could take a seat.

"Sure. Please do."

He put his hands in his pocket as his sight wander my room. "I'm sure you know what brought me here." he said while he sits down on the chair in front of my desk.

"Nope. I don't know why you're here."

"I'm here to talk about the sea that will soon be mine."

♡□□□□♡

A|N

I AM NOT CALM!

FINALLY, AUTHOR, AFTER YEARS SINCE THE "UNKNOWN CONNECTIONS FROM THE PAST", YOU PUBLISHED THE FIRST CHAPTER OF ITS BOOK TWO!

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!!!

*Anyways, people! I am thinking after this book, there'll be book 3
AAAAA!!*

I love you all! I really do! This shit is for you people!

THANK YOU FOR THE PATIENCE!THANK YOU THANK YOU!

I HOPE YOU CAN SEE ME IN TEARS!

Chapter One

"I'm here to talk about the sea that will soon be mine."

I raised my chin in disbelief. *How can he be that sure*, I thought.

I removed my sight from him as I sat down. I want to remain calm because I hate showing bad attitude to other countries. Yet, I'm thinking China deserve to be treated bad anyway.

"How have you been lately?"

"I'm fine."

"You look unhappy to see me."

Why the fuck would I be? I thought again. "No," I said. "It's Friday the 13th. Bad things happen lately."

"Oh! How come I forgot about that?"

Is it me or he actually act fake here? Such a plastic like his products. He actually asked how I've been like he actually care for me. If he does, he wouldn't have pushed me down the stairs before.

He continued, "Well, I don't believe stories about misfortune in this date. This is just a made up stories."

Well, you're a misfortune.

"I do believe in them because Malaysia told us his experiences every year on Friday the 13th." I leaned back on my seat again as I cross my arms. I'm feeling bored. "Let's begin talking about what you're here for."

"Yes, right. I was thinking you can now agree with giving your sea and... be a part of my territory."

"AHAHAHA." I gave a sarcastic laugh. "Me being part of your territory? When?"

Then, I was reminded of what America told me. Whatever China wants, he'll get it whatever the cost. No matter how I try to be brave enough to face such a big country like China, I end up getting scared about the possibility he might take the sea BY FORCE.

I turned silent.

'Hey, hey, Phil. What's going on?'

I groaned silently and shut my eyes close. "Be silent for a while, Martial, please." Then, I massaged my forehead again.

"Martial?"

My eyes opened wide in shock. I was distracted from my thought when I heard China mentioning his name. I just realized as well that I said the name loud. *Fuck. What should I do?*

"No. Nothing. I meant... territories. Yes. Territories, it is. I mean, they are."

He hummed. "I heard that name before. I'm not sure when. Maybe back in high school."

Oh shit. This shouldn't go further.

"I am saying words when I'm thinking. Sorry for that," I said as an excuse. I licked my lips and leaned close to my table. "Let's go back to our topic, please."

I never heard a reply from him. He must've thought I'm suspicious.

I just continued talking, "My parents and brothers fought for my independence. I can't give it to you."

"Brothers? How many brothers do you have? I thought you only have one."

Yawa. If I can just talk about something that'll make me avoid

talking about HIM, I'll be free from worries. This is getting worse. Damn, why did he come here on Friday the 13th?!

*Stress, strong emotions,
senses and memories
triggers the switching...*

'Phil. Do you need me there?'

I slammed my hand on the desk in annoyance. Then, I curled my hand into a fist and breathed heavily, forcing my self to calm down.

"We're not... talking about my family right now, China. That's why I want to say. I'm not giving up my land or my seas to you."

I looked back at him. I can either confusion or no emotions at all in his face. He looked serious. Maybe, he's thinking I wasn't acting like the actual me today. I haven't slammed a hand on the table before. I haven't felt this annoyed before.

As much as possible, no one else should know I have DID. They might use it against me. They might treat it as my weakness. And I don't want Martial to attempt killing someone again.

China stood up from his seat. "You're impossible," he said his last sentence, and walked out.

"China, please close the door!"

He walked back by the door. "Hm? Why?"

Among all the people who come by here, he's the only person who asked why!

"Just close it. Please."

China never said anything else and pulled the door close.

I hissed.

"He almost find ou-"

"Hey, Phil!"

"AAHH! *PUTANG INA NAMAN!*" [*What a motherf**ker!*] I grabbed a pen from the pencil holder on my desk and threw it at China. HE JUST GOT OUT AND WENT HERE AGAIN WITHOUT KNOCKING AGAIN?!

"Oh wait. My phone's in my pocket."

I grabbed my stapler and aimed it at him.

"WOAH! WOAH! I'M SORRY!"

"CLOSE THE DAMN DOOR, CHINA!"

"YES! I WILL!" Then, he closed the door once again.

I didn't put the stapler down... just in case he'll come back in surprise again.

I waited for a while and I listened carefully if there'll be footsteps going near.

When I was finally calmed down a bit, I placed my stapler back on my desk and sat slowly on my chair with my eyes staring at the wooden door.

'Hey, what happened? I can feel stress on 'ya.'

"Our secret almost spill out from my mouth." I answered in a whisper. "He ASSUMED I finally decided to give ourselves to him!"

'Well, because he knows you're weak and is easily conquered.'

"Martial, I'm not like that anymore. I rarely trust other people."

'I doubt that.'

I paused for a moment.

"What if he'll begin searching about you? I accidentally said your name loud. I'm sorry."

'There are only few friends of yours who know I exist.'

"Japan and... Kuya Del, *papa* and... *mama*."

It felt heavy to say the name I used to call her. Mama. I... missed her.

She was gone from our family for years. She got very sick. Laguna didn't make it to make her better. She died in her sleep, as I remember. She used to comfort me and Martial when we felt worried about this condition we had.

'So, it's just Japan. Didn't she promise she won't tell anyone?'

"Uh... yes, she did."

'Let's wish she won't tell China.'

"She isn't close to him."

'We don't know what China can do.'

I sighed. "Yeah."

My phone suddenly vibrated in my pocket. I quickly picked it up and read what appeared on my screen.

A call from Malaysia.

I slid an icon on the screen and placed the phone on my ear.
"Hello?"

"HI, PHILIP!"

"H-Hi, Mal."

"Vietnam invited us over his house. You gonna come?"

"What's the occasion?"

"Indonesia got an idea to use against China. Brunei told him

*about what China did to him
lately. We'd like to talk about!"*

"If it's about China, then I'm coming over."

Chapter Two

BEIJING CHINA



Martial. Who could that be?

The train I was riding on right now is silent. I had a moment to be just in my thought.

Expanding my territory has been my dream ever since I was a child. My ancestors did it well during their time. I must do it good too.

Yet, this *martial* must've been halting Philip in agreeing with me to take over his land and sea. Philip has never been that brave enough to disagree with me. He's weak. I can push him down the stairs. He couldn't fight back. But now... he's resisting.

Both of his land and sea are perfect to be my country's raw material resource. I am able to run businesses and investments if I have enough sources.

I might sound selfish. No, I'm not. I'm willing to help the Philip's people when they're under me. Unless... they fail to do their job.

If I failed to get what I want... ah, **no**.

I will never fail to get what I want.

The train stopped by a station. This is where my house is nearer. I help my brief case up and walked outside as the automatic door opened.

I feel really tired. Thinking exhausts me. Almost all of the strategies I did to convince Philip failed. I must do something with it.

No.

For now, I want to rest. If I'm able to.

I got the keys of my apartment from the pocket of my leather jacket. Well, I have a mansion but... I prefer to be in a small space so that my thoughts won't get far from me. No need to interpret what I said.

I noticed my door has a small opening. *Someone got inside.*

I sighed. *He* came by here again.

I pushed it open and the smell of a cigarette welcomed me. This happens everytime *he's* here so, I got used to it. As I step in and look around, I saw Korea sitting on my sofa in front of his laptop placed on the center table. He just removed his cigarette from his mouth and our sight met.

"What brought you here?" I asked while I put down my case on the floor beside the sofa.

"I need internet."

"For what? Work?"

"Ya. South's people became annoying. I wanna file a case against them."

I headed to my room just behind the sofa he's sitting on. "Don't you have your own internet in your place?" I removed my jacket from me and hang in by the door.

"Nah. I wanna be here."

That made me stop for a while and have a moment to feel my heart beating.

I am late to realize I wanted him here too. North Korea has been with me since our first year in high school. We grew up very close for we almost had the same type, hobbies to do and personality.

I went out of my room and wrapped my arms around Korea's neck. My hand rested on his chest. *A certain feeling* is driving me insane and do this to him. This happens when I'm so near him. I gave a light kiss on his cheek. And as he look back and remove the

cigarette from him again, he kissed me on my lips. He faced back on his laptop and I sniffed his neck.

"I missed you," I said, took his cigarette from his hand and sucked its smoke.

"I know you do, *yeobo [darling]*." He reached my head and patted me.

I blew the smoke out and gave back his cigarette. I went to the kitchen then. "What do you want for dinner?"

"Ramen."

I chuckled. "Sure." I got the ramen packs on the cabinet above me and prepared a pot where I'd boil water. "What do you want to drink?"

It took like a minute before he even answer. "Eh. I don't know."

I started boiling water. I opened the packs while waiting for it. And I started to think... what do we want to drink tonight? It'll be fun again to drink alcohol since he's here.

. . .

Who's Martial?

The question suddenly came across my mind again. Right. I was suppose to be thinking about that. I was easily distracted by North Korea, but I'm not mad about it.

When bubbles start to appear in the pot, I put the noodles in. I also decided to ask Korea about my thought. "Korea, have you heard of *martial*?"

"You mean, martial law? The one you used in Tiananmen Square?"

Oh, yeah. That.

"Why'd you ask?"

I stirred the soften noddles in the pot with a fork. "I came to Philip's office. He mentioned it... as someone. I don't know. He said *martial* as a name."

"He must be nervous around you, *yeobo*."

"No. He didn't look scared. I don't know."

"Well, if this *martial* is a countryhuman, then I'll need him in my place."

I, then, poured the seasonings in.

"Look, why would Philippines need that *martial law* if... that's what he's talking about?" Korea gave a follow up question.

"I don't know, but maybe *that or he* is the reason why Philip can say no to my offers."

. . .

I froze when I recalled a moment years ago. I turned around and face to the living room. "Hey, do you remember the last day we bullied Philip in high school?"

Korea looked up to the ceiling for a while. "Oh, *ne [yes]!* He punched you in the face so bad."

Then, more memories came rushing in my mind. "I-I saw him switch his flag! I was looking up to him and- and he said like '*Law!*' or something. So maybe, he is indeed referring to *martial law*."

"So, United Nations was right you were hallucinating after he punched you."

I faced back to the stove. I felt angry to the fact that I'm the only one among us two who saw that moment.

That time, Philip punched me and I fell on the ground. He sat on my lap and was about to punch me and screamed! I just can't remember it.

I am tapping the fork on the concrete while thinking. *Who is this?*
What is he?

. . .

"Look, if this *martial law* in the Philippines existed, we would've heard about it! It's so-"

I stopped when a hand held my arm and turned me around. Korea is close as possible to me. I heard him turn of the stove while he's looking straight to my eyes.

He distractes me from my thoughts. How could he do this to me?

I saw him smirked. "Thinking too much might lower your appetite."

Korea just touched my cheek. I slapped his hand away. "So what?!"

Then, he quickly gripped my collar and pulled me, causing me to lean to his face. His lips... touched mine. I tried resisting but he's too strong against me. He is pressing himself to me.

Mā de [Shit]. He is turning me on.

I gave him what Korea want. I pulled him close and kissed him back. I licked his soft bottom lip and he quickly got his tongue inside me. I put my hands on his face. It's in heat. He badly wanted this then.

I'm hearing him moan softly.

I realized... I love him so much. I love it when we do this.

We both parted from the kiss. Korea is panting. I caressed his lip that is so wet because of me. "Is this the reason why you came over?" I chuckled after asking him.

"Yeah... you got me now."

I let Korea rest himself on me. I kissed his forehead and hugged him.

"Buy me *Soju*."

"Hm?"

"I said buy me *Soju*." Korea repeated him self. "The drink South was advertising. I want to try it with you."



Minutes Later

Around Southeast Asia

I bought the drink North Korea asked me to buy. Seeing the color of the bottle, which is green, and the pictures of fruits stucked on it made me guess the drink won't be that bitter.

I counted the change the vendor gave me to check if it's correct. Glad, it is. I put my money in my pocket and walk on my way back to my apartment.

I remembered Vietnam is a friend of mine. And he likes drinking as well. I wonder if he has a drink we could try as well. I decided to walk by his house.

I stopped in front of his house's gate. From here, I'm here loud music from the inside. There were cheering as well. If there is a party inside, there would've been flashing lights, but no. I opened the gate and walked in.

Yet...

Even before I reached the stairs before the door, I heard someone vomiting. I heard it here... outside.

So, I didn't knock for a moment and took a chance to look for that someone. They must be sick.

I searched on the left side of the house. There was no one there.

I went to the other side of the house and near the garbage cans, I saw someone leaning on the wall. It was dark there; the light from the window didn't reach where he stands. I cannot recognize them.

They continued vomiting.

I slowly and silently went close to that person, so I won't surprise him. His drunk. He could punch me.

He suddenly fell on the ground.

"Shit." I rushed at his place and watched him trying to stand up. I badly wanted to help him but I'm afraid to be in trouble. I don't have a gun with me so, I must be careful. "Are you okay?" I asked, worriedly.

Well, he got up on his knees. I watch him massage his forehead. He groaned too.

"D-Do you need help? I'll call hel-"

He stood up. The light shone on his head... revealing his flag.

I dropped the bottle I was holding on my way. I stepped... slowly backwards. I started to breathe heavily and my knees weakened.

Th-That's him! Th-The person nobody else saw but me!

He turned and glared at me. Then, he walked.

I panicked. I began to run but feet stepped on a rock so I fell down on the ground. I looked back and saw him coming closer. His face is serious. Terrifying. Cold. He got his hand gun from his back and loaded it.

"N-No. No. No. No. No." I begged as I crawl backwards to maintain our distance. I blocked my hand at him.

My sight is getting blurry.

I began sobbing.

He pointed his gun at me... and pulled the trigger. **I heard the bang.**

...

Then, something hard hit my head.

♡□□□□♡

A|N

BRUHH HAHAHAHAHA

taste the law bitches

Chapter Three

[image]

A|N: I got the picture from Rappler.

* * *

MANILA PHILIPPINES

- - □□◦□□-□□◦□□ - -

*Continuation of
Chapter One...*

"WHOOOH! IT'S TIME TO PARTY!"

I don't know... I'm really not in the mood for parties now. I came here for a meeting... not for parties.

Three more countries got out of the car we rode in. I offered to help Vietnam carry the case of beer but, he said he can carry it himself.

No one in our group, except Vietnam, agreed to drink during this meeting. In fact, he is a heavy drinker. Well, I don't know who'll be the last man standing when he competes with Martial.

I stayed behind the group as they go nearby the door.

I looked at the house, from the ground to its roof. It's tall yet narrow. Here in Vietnam's place, the houses are built really close to each other and are narrow. Like in Europe, they are colored differently. This house is colored white.

Next, I looked at every country present for this event.

Brunei.

Indonesia.

Malaysia.

Only us five then.

"Hey, Philip!" Malaysia placed his hand on my shoulder. He gave me a smile when I turned to him. "You're silent. What's up?" he asked me.

I faced again in front, seeing the others go inside the house.

"I'm fine. I guess. Worried."

He hit me with his elbow. "Don't frown, bud! China hasn't bombed your place yet!" Then, he leaned close to my ear and whispered, "We all got you. We don't want you to end up like Vietnam."

That's kinda blurry. "Hm? What do you mean?"

As he talk, we began walking. "Ya know. China and Vietnam might seem buddies but they do have a problem since 90's. Heard the news that Vietnam confronted China?"

"N-No. Why?"

"He found Chinese vessels near his land so, he responded by sending his vessel. Then, they fought. Then, he declared that China caused violation on his economic zone. Big story."

I sighed. "Palawan reported almost the same thing."

As we all got inside the house, I sat on the sofa. The chandelier got my attention. The frame is geometric and the bulbs were like candles.

The walls were white and there were frames. The wooden divider is colored dark brown. There were plants by the window. Everything here made me feel relaxed.

"Phil will cook *sigsig*." I heard Malaysia say it and I almost laugh at how he say the word.

"Nah. You told me late so, I ain't cooking one." I said back, followed by a chuckle.

Brunei and Indonesia sat on the sofa across me. Malaysia sat on my side.

On the center table, Vietnam put shot glasses, a pitcher of water, a bucket of ice and a bottle of beer. He also opened a pack of mixed junk food.

As I stare at the glass... the blurrier my sight become.

. . .

"Yo, Phil?"

Snapped back to reality.

I turned my face to Malaysia, then also looked at Indo and Brunei who's seems worried.

"You spacin' out?"

I shook my head. "No. I'm good."

"You don't look like it, Phil." Vietnam said while he pour himself a half of the glass of beer.

"Yeah. You look like you're thinking to deep." Indonesia added to what Vietnam said.

I forced a laugh. "Don't worry for me. I'm all good."

Who the fuck wouldn't go crazy when you almost spit out the very secret you have?! What if China will start stalking me just to know what I'm hiding from him?!

"So everyone!"

We all turned to Vietnam. He drank the beer on the glass.

"We'll do the usual. Every time you people want to say something, you'll have to drink a shot of beer."

"But I don't drink." Brunei complained.

"You have to. Unless you won't talk much." Vietnam poured himself another shot and drank it quick. "So, how's everybody with China?"

Malaysia picked up his glass and filled it with beer. "I don't feel safe on MY sea anymore. There were Chinese ships on it." He drank the beer.

Vietnam did too. "I don't fear China's gonna bomb me. It's not new to me."

Brunei looked like he hesitated to pour himself a beer. As I know, he doesn't drink much... or he doesn't even drink. He was looking at his glass while he talk. "I... I only have a small portion of the sea and it is shared by Malaysia. I fear China will take our access to it. I don't want a fight with him. I might lose easily."

"Go on. Drink it," said Vietnam.

"No way I'm drinking this. Please Ind-"

"No, no. You drink it."

I watched him sigh in defeat. He closed his eyes shut while he drinks it. Then, he showed disgust.

"How about you, Phil?"

When I was asked that, I saw everyone looking at me. I do want to answer... yet... I don't want to drink. *Why does this have to be done like this?*

I got the bottle and poured my glass. "Uhm," I started, "I had a talk with China, and... he wants me to be a part of his territory."

"APA?!" [WHAT?!]

"Oh shit, of course, he will."

"You said no, right?"

"I knew it! Expanding his territory is his intention..."

I heard their reactions.

I answered, "Of course, I said no. I just freed myself after years of wars and I'll just let him take me? No way!"

"Good decision. Being with China is like having a pain in the ass."

"Indonesia, why are you even here?"

"Malaysia, I never wanted to drink, okay?!" Indo scolded. "Ugh, fine." Vietnam poured his glass with the drink as he continued answering. "I'm here because I saw the Chinese illegally fishing on my sea. I thought there were warships attacking us, until we knew those we're just fishermen doing their job with explosives."

I drank my beer and put it down on the center table. "China became aggressive nowadays. I worry what more he might do to us. America reminded me that China will do everything to get what he want... whatever the cost. He might kill people."

"Of course, we're not letting the happen." Vietnam drank straight and dropped his glass on the table. "I have a suggestion. Why not we pool ourselves together and fight against him?"

"Oh, please. Not a war again."

"Let's ask ASEAN about this then."

"ASEAN shouldn't get involved. He's the only organization that holds us all together. If he disappears, Southeast Asian countries' relations will dissolve with him."

"As far as possible, we should keep these problems in ourselves for the safety of our fellow Southeast Asians."

"I suggest Phil and Indo must lead the team."

My eyes widened when I heard my name.

"Ayo, why me?" Indonesia asked the three and he turned to Vietnam who said that we're leading the team. "I'm not even a part of the dispute, man."

"Okay, then Phil should do." Vietnam changed his mind quick while he turned his sight to me and drink a glass of wine.

I shook my head. "N-No way. I have nothing against China."

"We'll have your back."

"And if Phil loses, the fall of the organization will do next."

Man, Malaysia's good at thinking about possible endings.

"Philip..." I watched Vietnam again filling my glass, "... Are you afraid of China?"

"Of course!" I blurted as if it's a question with an obvious answer.

"Then, you're not good enough for your people."

.

. . .

What?

"V, don't talk to him like that."

"Philip, you had been in wars. Haven't you developed yet? Where's the nationalism in your answer?" I felt like being choked by Vietnam's continuous questions. He handed me the glass. He even gave me a smirk. "If you kept on being such a bottom, you would be conquered easily by anyone."

I never wanted to be called weak.

I tried all my best for my people... to give them a land not borrowed from any countries.

Yet, I was so young when I knew the word *war*. I don't know what that is before until I was tortured like... a stray dog. I was left hungry, cold and sick.

Throughout the next years, I did know how to fight back. But I became too dependent on Martial. I let him do the planning and

sometimes he even fight for me.

Man. Maybe I am indeed weak. And I hate being like that.

In drinking such a normal beverage, I shouldn't complain. I must drink so no one might think I'm still afraid.

I took the glass from Vietnam and had a moment to look at it. He filled this full this time. I sighed. "China is a pain in the ass. He shouldn't be tolerated." I drank it straight and exhaled its bitterness out. God, I felt the burning liquor flowing from my throat to my stomach.

"What 'chu gonna do now?! Would you let yourself defeated?!"

"*HINDI!*" [*NO!*]

"Would you let China win?!"

"NO!"

"I can't hear the spirit, Manila Philippines!"

"Vietnam, you're making him drunk! Stop it!"

"He must know how to scream back at the enemies!"

"Phil might not able to walk home if you-"

"He can drink! He is alcohol tolerant!"

"He is not like you, Vietnam!"

"He is our leader that'll lead Southeast Asian nations win their territories against China's illegal *dick* line!"

. . .

Fuck. I started to feel heaviness in my head.

*Multiple personality
disorder...*

*A mental health condition
of having two or more
separate personalities...*

"Phil! What are you gonna do now?!"

"W-We must... **fight back!**" I drank the beer in my glass straight again and handed it to Vietnam. "We're not letting him **take what's OURS!**"

"WE RAN OUT OF BEER!"

"We must go home now."

"Shh, Brunei. We must build Phil's nationalism! He's being a TRUE LEADER!"

"Guys, this is bad..."

. . .

Oh, God. I'm feeling dizzy.

*Stress, strong emotions,
senses and memories
triggers the switching...*

Vietnam's laughs were loud. He forced me to hold a new bottle of beer to drink. My surroundings were swirling. My vision is blurry.

"DRINK IT, PHIL!"

I did.

I must not retreat from small challenges like this.

I must... appear better. I must become better. I must look stronger than who I was before... years ago.

I sipped the bitter drink and gulped as much as I can. *God.* I'm feeling so full. I'm gonna vomit.

The situation is driving me crazy. They're getting noisy around me.

"DO YOU FEEL THE BURN?! CAN YOU NOW FEEL THE VICTORY?!"

I raised the bottle I'm holding despite the dizziness I feel. "**RAMDAM KO NA!**" [*I CAN FEEL IT!*]

"WHAT SHALL WE DO NOW, LEADER?!"

"Vietnam, stop it! He doesn't look okay now!"

"I'M FINE! I'M NOT DRUNK!" I shouted at Malaysia before drinking the liquor from the bottle again.

I dropped the bottle down on the table and panted. I feel hot. It's getting hot here. I'm sweating. I feel tired. I feel full.

"WHAT SHALL WE DO TO CHINA NOW?! SAY THE WORDS, MANILA!" Then, I felt a smack on my back and loud laughs.

"W-We... We'll start attacking him back... until he can't stand against us anymore!" I answered between my heavy breathings.

"TO THE FALL OF CHINA!"

"FALL OF CHINA!"

. . .

I gagged.

I felt like I'm gonna puke.

I wrapped my arms around my stomach. I feel overloaded.

I patted Malaysia and I quickly got his attention. "P-Phil, are you okay?"

"I-I... I wanna use the bathroom."

"Do you want me to help you go there?"

*Stress, strong emotions,
senses and memories*

triggers the switching...

Then, I felt a sudden pain in my head that caused a severe dizziness. There's a loud ringing then. I began to feel light.

N-No. Martial... don't do it here...

"Phil, do you want me to come-"

"No. Please. I can go there myself."

I pushed myself on the sofa and I was swinging, trying to get myself in balance. I denied the help other countries were offering me. I wanna do this myself. I might switch suddenly.

I touched the walls to keep myself walking.

The pain suddenly hit me again. I flinched and groaned.

No. I must go to the backyard so I can run home when I need to without anyone seeing.

I tried my best to walk the way to the exit in the kitchen. I tried my best to fight back Martial from taking over. On my way, I gagged again. I closed my mouth to prevent having a mess on the floor. I walked faster outside.

It was dark here but I can hear my feet stepping on grasses. It's dark here. I cannot see anything. I ended up falling on my knees. And I vomitted. I couldn't stop myself. It's being pulled out from me.

God. I feel sick.

I felt angry.

*Stress, strong emotions,
senses and memories
triggers the switching...*

I dropped my fist on the ground and groaned while vomitting out everything I ate and drunk. It tasted sour... and bitter.

I felt light again.

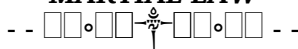
I feel like losing control.

"Are you okay? Do you need help?"

I can't answer. I feel like floating. My arms... legs... are weak. My
breathes are echoing...

Until I gave up fighting *him*.

MARTIAL LAW



Finally. I made it out.

Whenever I feel Philip's body are geting weak, it's a signal I must
take over.

I can finally feel his arms. I'm able to push this body up and stand. I
must help Philip go home.

"I'll call hel-"

I stood up when I heard the voice. A light shone from my side.

I slowly turned myself to face that man. And it turned out to be China, my brother's rival on the Philippine Sea.

I feel angry. Now that he knew I exist... that there is a flag like mine, which is a flipped version of Philip's... he might tell it quick and spread it fast like a virus.

Panic is what I saw in his eyes but I ignored it. He is dangerous my brother's country.

I pulled out the gun on Philip's belt. Luckily, I asked Phil to keep it with him. I reloaded it and go near China.

"No. No. No. No."

He is stepping back and fall on the ground. It's funny to see him crawling away from me.

I pointed the gun at him.

Yet, I decided something peacefully. I can do something better than this.

I'm going to talk to him instead.

I shot on the ground just about an inch away from his head. And when he shouted and looked away from me, I hit his head with the gun and he passed out real quick.

I chuckled. "*Hina mo naman.*" [*Such a weakling.*]

*So, stay calm when you
witness the person
switch into somebody
else...*

. . .

Now, how am I gonna bring him to our place? Damn, I should've asked Phil to use my car.

I got Phil's phone from the pocket and dialed Metro Manila. He picked up the call fast. "Hello?"

"Good evening, Metro. This is Martial Law. Sorry for the interruption. I'd like to ask you to pick me up here at Vietnam's place. Please just use GPS. I don't know how the hell these people got here."

"Is a motorcycle okay, sir?"

"God, no! I have a corpse with me!"

He went silent.

"O-Okay... A van then. I'll be on my way there, sir."

Chapter Four

While waiting for China to wake up, I took wine from my refrigerator here in Phil's office. Yes, I did ask him to put one here so we won't bother going outside to buy one. I poured some into my glass, stood by the window behind the chair and drank the wine.

Manila is such a beautiful city. There are lights in every building and from the traffic. It's like the nearest view of stars at night. It is named after Phil, yet it is Metro Manila who's in charge of this place. Man, I remember doing sermons at Metro to make sure this place will be disciplined and well-organized since this is the capital of the country.

I sipped my beverage. Sweet and bitter, it is.

I started to think about what I should do to China now that he saw me again... for the second time. At least, I did worse. I almost shot him in the face. Years ago, I only punched him. I would've killed him. It is equivalent to finishing Phil's problem. Why am I this smart? Killing is indeed the answer. Ha!

But for now, I need to be chill. Or else, my brother will be sent to the mental hospital again because of me.

As I heard movement from the wooden Cleopatra chair, where I laid down China, I quickly turned back to face it. He is scratching his head, must be feeling dizzy. Good for him. He wasn't able to shout what he saw.

"Good evening."

I saw him get surprised as I speak.

I watched his eyes look down from my feet to my eyes. I can trace confusion on him. *Therefore, China doesn't like undiscovered creatures. He fears them.* I thought.

I sat down on the chair near the desk. "Please. Join me in a drink." I pointed at the bottle of wine placed on my desk. I also prepared him another glass.

I patiently waited for him to stand the fuck up and sit down in front of me. It annoys me to see someone who's scared-looking in front of me, while, when I'm gone, he has the guts to talk shit to my brother. *China is secretly a prey.*

I forced myself to kindly smile at him. I even poured him a glass of my delicious wine while keeping my eyes on him.

*Multiple personality
disorder...*

*A mental health condition
of having two or more
separate personalities...*

"How are you feeling?" I asked while sliding the glass to him.

China looked at it for a moment before answering. "I'm... good."

I chuckled. "I don't expect you to be like that to me, Beijing China."

His eyes are avoiding mine. I wasn't even in my teasing-him stage yet. How cute.

"Why are you in that place? Were you invited?"

"N-No. I just passed by."

"Then?"

He sipped his drink. "I-I was just... I'm trying to help Philip."

I slammed my hand on the desk. "REALLY?!"

I heard him gasp. His eyes widened as hell and he almost stand up

from his seat. He's damn surprised, a hundred per cent. That made me laugh at him as I leaned back on my chair. I saw him grip his glass. Oh, my God! This man will die in this room soon. "Sorry. That was a joke." I said while stopping myself from laughing. I sighed. "Why are you feeling so tensed? I won't bite you."

"I-I must go-"

"No, no, no, no, no, no." I stopped him from standing up. "Stay."

He turned silent and sat back on his chair.

I drank my wine empty and put it down. "Sorry for scaring you. I think I should start in a friendly way. Want me to add your drink?"

*This isn't a demon
possession. Alters aren't
inhuman persons...*

China nodded, unsurely. I poured him a drink.

I decided to open a conversation about the issue between him and my brother. I want to talk to him about my suggestion as well. This is only a one-time opportunity to talk to him about that without his pride present. And I know, this is the only topic that can make him stay longer. "Is it okay for you to... open up about your plans on the West Philippine Sea?"

"I guess so."

"I know that you're aware the sea is important to every Filipino's life, right? Why are you taking it from us?"

"It is ours since 1947. We're taking it back from you."

I can feel his pride going back. "Nine dash line?" I asked. "The illegal line you and Taiwan did?"

"It isn't illegal!" He began to raise his voice. "UNCLOS wasn't just

born that time we made it. I don't know why he disapproved my claim. IT WAS OURS!" I watched him drink. I kept listening. "We need it as well as how you need it."

"If you take the whole sea, there won't be any part left for the other countries..."

"But it's mine-"

"That's why UNCLOS disapproved it." I leaned forward to the desk. "Where can other countries like Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei get water resources without the sea?"

"They can buy from me!"

I would facepalm. *China being China*. "You sell fake and short-living products, China. Phil even doubts you with the products you're providing anymore."

"At least, they're affordable and cheap. Unlike US."

He has a point. He has a point.

I made a pause for a moment. "I'd like to know your side about my suggestion, China." I leaned back to my seat. "I'd like... to start a *friendship* with you."

"Hm." That was the first response I got before he drinks.

I explained, "If we made this possible, both Filipinos and Chinese people will get benefit like... we'll share the West Philippine Sea instead. No threats anymore. No raging wars. Our soldiers might be trained by each other. When it comes to businesses, business partners in both of you and Philip's country will take benefit as well. What do you think?"

He looked away, probably to think. China licked his lips. "What if your people might be taken advantage by your people? Would you let me kill them?"

I chuckled. "I won't even stop you! I mean, hurting your people is not part of that *friendship*. So, **if anyone tries to ruin the peace,**

then let's rest them in peace."

. . .

*Alters can fall in
love...*

. . .

. . .

I turned silent.

I suddenly felt something.

This...

I felt like I said it... before.

I heard no noise around me. China became silent as well.

I went back to reality when he picked up his glass and I watch him drink. "The sudden Deja Vu," he said and I was surprised. He knew what I felt. "I think I heard it from someone."

I just remained silent as I feel confusing in this sudden event.

I started recalling. I cannot remember saying that.

And both of us felt it. Yet, I cannot remember being with him before.

What is this?

I drank my wine. "Just think of what I said, China," I said to bring us back to our conversation. "Think of it because it is for both of our people and to prevent the war. You may now leave."

"Who are you?"

I was just about to turn my chair around but I was halted by that question.

"W-Who are you? Why is no one else can see you but... me?"

I raised my chin. "Martial Law. I'm... Philippines' alter." I turned my sight to him. "We aren't actually allowed to tell anyone about his condition. We fear it might be used against us." I drank my wine again.

"That multiple personality disorder..."

"Precisely." I leaned to my desk and put down my glass. "Phil is suffering trauma because of his past with other countries. If you're harsh with his people, don't be with my brother."

I paused for a moment and continued. "I trust you as much as I trust our brother, Gregorio Del Pilar. I saw the fear in your eyes when you saw me back there. I heard your voice asking Phil if he's okay. I felt you patting his back. I don't doubt trusting you because of that. I believe... there is kindness in you."

I looked away from him and put my hands together. "I, *the law*, can kill you myself. Yet, I must see first if you'll do ruin my trust."

China isn't even responding. Yet, I hope everything I said is enough to convince him.

I sighed. "You may leave if you wish. The Soju is in the ref."

I turned my chair around, facing the window. I placed my fingers above my lips as I think.

The words heard before he left made my heart race...

"I promise I'll be worthy of your trust, Sir Martial Law."

So, stay calm when you

*witness the person
switch into somebody
else...*

Chapter Five

WARNING:
Homophobic!Katipunan

* * *

MANILA PHILIPPINES

- - □□◦□□--□□◦□□ - -

[The next day...]

We, with Kuya Del, agreed to visit papa in his house today. He never left it even if mama was already gone. I bought a mocha cake for him. Del said he'll order spaghetti and carbonnara. I thought this is a great idea.

Right now, we are in Martial's car. I'm driving carefully, yet my brother made me feel stressed with his news!

"Wait. So, you told China about us?"

'Dude, that sounded like we're in a relationship and I told China-'

"But you really did?!"

'Yeeeeeeah, I did. I would've killed him but I can't.'

"Uh-huh. You cared for him more than our secret." My eyebrows were bunched together and stretched my lip to the side as I sigh.

'If I kill him, you'd be sent to the mental hospital again! That's what I thought! Why would you think I care for China more?! You're my brother!'

"Really?"

'Ha. Now, you're not believing me.'

I groaned and rolled my eyes. "Well, you can just leave him there!" I shouted at him back.

'He saw me! He'll tell North Korea again that he saw me!'

"He wouldn't believe him anyway!"

'Ugh! Philip, why don't you just believe me?! Can't you feel what I feel?!'

"I'm just not convinced! Okay?! You told OUR enemy about my condition! Now, let's suffer with the consequence!"

'He promised he'll be worthy of my trust!'

I stepped on the break when I heard something *strange* from him. I was pulled to front then, leaned back to my seat.

"He did what?"

'He promised he'll be worthy of my trust.'

I laughed at it. I feel funny. "And you believed him?!"

'Well, he's honest that he came to help you. Why would I dou-'

"You doubted America and you didn't to China. How can you be this weird?!"

'Man, I haven't heard you talking like this. You doubted China. And you doubted me. Am I an enemy too?'

I scratched my forehead. I would've said **no** quick but... I'm afraid to offend him. I shall not talk to him like he hasn't helped me in my life.

I worry for myself... really. I am the host. I am the one who's suffering with the personality disorder. I worry that another alter might exist because of stress and fear of war. Because the psychologist said it's possible if my trauma was triggered again.

I'm gonna be WEAK.

I will be easily dominated.

And that will be because... Martial Law revealed the secret. So, I can still blame him. He CAN be the enemy.

I pressed my finger on the side of my head. For now, I must consider his feelings.

"No. You're not."

'You took a long time to answer. Do you really have to think that long? You do really doubt me.'

"Martial, kuya. Just... make sure he won't do anything with the secret."

'I know I'll be to blame if he did bad. I know, yes.'

"Good. Sorry for the argument." I finally calmed down.

'It's fine. It felt new to hear you get upset like that.'

"Let's... not bring this up at the house. And don't tell *papa* I was drunk last night."

* .∴. ✧ ◆ ✧ .∴.*

[After the trip...]

Kuya Del hasn't arrived yet. I went inside the house first, bringing the box of cake with me.

I saw the door was left open so, I assumed *papa's* inside. I opened the gate and walked close to it.

I started to recall some memories. I and Del saved money to renovate the house. Glad we made it possible. Now, our parents' house isn't made of *kawayan* anymore. But made with cement and blocks. We made a gate too to ensure their safety while we're gone. This won't be broken down easily. Unlike the first home my parents had that was burnt by Spaniards (the reason why Marcos died).

I was surprised to see no one in the living room, but the television is on. The sun was about to set. It's afternoon. Where could *papa* go

at this time?

"Pa?" I called out. I received no response.

I went to the kitchen. No one's here too. I placed the box on the table and went around the house to search for my dad.

I tried going upstairs.

Oh... this is where I and Del used to sleep and play.

I took a peak in my old room. I smiled when I saw my stuffed toys are still here. Aw. Even Martial's toy guns. My high school books too! My embarrassing Grade 6 graduation photo is here too! Why would my parents keep such things?!

The mirror too. The long mirror where I first saw Martial.

I looked around the room to see if nobody is really here before stepping in. I went closer to the mirror.

I see not my reflection, but the image my twin brother smiling at me.

'I MISSED BEING HERE!'

"I bet you do."

'My name's Martial Law. I'm your alter.' He laughed then after he adjusted his hand for a handshake... just like what he did before.

I chuckled. "I remember that moment well, Martial." I made another look around the room. "I remember too that I found a picture of *mama* and *papa* carrying twin babies and you told me we'll find Marcos. It turned out to be you." I dropped myself on the bed.

'That was the happiest day of my life, knowing that you're my brother after all these years of hiding our secret from our parents.'

"Yeah."

"SINONG NAND'YAN?!"

"AHH!" I jumped off my bed and quickly turned to the door. At first I felt terrified with the bolo knife he's holding. But I felt relieved when I noticed it's just *papa*.

Yes. The same bolo knife he had when he was fighting the Spaniards. I did saw him fight. He was brave and I idolize him so bad. His eyes widened. He must've thought a stranger climbed up here to steal things. He must've thought he was attacked. Now, he's surprised to see me.

The longer I stare at him, the more I think he must have been lonely while we were away. Imagine leaving alone here with the pictures of your family that you fought for for years. He probably miss *mama* too more than I do.

"A-Anak..." [Son...]

My heart melted by his voice as a tear slid from his eye.

"Hello *po*." My lips were shivering when I tried to smile. Then, my sight became blurry. I couldn't help myself. I came to him to wrap my arms around him tight for a hug. *I missed home. I missed my family.*

"I-I-I didn't know you'll come home," he muttered as he buries his face on my shoulder.

"I don't know where to find you, *pa*. Where have you been?!" I asked as I part away from him, wipe my tears and sniff.

"I was in the backyard, getting rid of grasses. Then, I heard someone talking here."

"*Pa?! Are you home?!?*"

We both faced the downstairs where Del's voice came from.

"*Aba! Del's here too.*"

"*Opo*. We decided to visit you today. We're both free 'til tomorrow."

I watched him stretched his lips to smile. "*Salamat, 'nak.*" [Thank

you, son.] He wrapped his arm around my neck and pulled me close to him. He gave a light kiss on my cheek.

Papa kept his hand on my shoulder as we walk downstairs. We headed to the kitchen and Del was already in there.

"Oh! You arrived first?!" Kuya Del asked me that question when he saw me. He came to me and gave me brotherly hug with a slight punch on my back.

"And you arrived last."

As he move away from me, he also gave a hug to *papa*.

Del turned to me again. "Is Martial with you?"

I narrowed my eyes and just smiled. I felt a little offended by that. "How can he not be with me?" I joked back.

Later, we prepared together the table for dinner. I was told to put the cake in the refrigerator for a while to let it chill.

Papa quickly fried rice, eggs and *tapa*. Man, I missed his recipes. He served them on the table. Then, he went to the living room to switch the TV channel to a news program and set its volume louder.

Kuya Del opened the *bilao* of spaghetti and carbonnara; each of them occupy the half part of the *bilao*. I love carbonnara, while both Del and *papa* prefer the other. He also boiled water. He said he wanted to drink coffee. Yeah, he liked coffee a lot. He's the same with Martial.

I got the neat, new plates from the cabinet where *mama* used to hide them. I prepared them on the table and put utensils on them too. I poured water in three drinking glasses and placed the!m beside the plates.

I've seen excitement on both of my family's faces. Del looked hungry that when he sat down, he picked up his spoon and fork and started eating. He served himself a serving of spaghetti on a separate plate and ate it too.

I and *papa* can't prevent to laugh at him because we've he enjoyed the food very much. We ate as well.

"Hm, how's Martial Law doing, by the way?" *Papa* asked before he swallow his food.

"Oh," I drank my water, "He sounds fine."

I heard my name.'

"Papa just asked how you are. I said you're fine." I explained to Martial, which may seem like talking to myself.

'He's there?! Tell him I said hi and I hope he was okay here too! Oh! Tell him I missed him too! I'd like to be taught arnis again!'

That's a lot. I cleared my throat to get *papa's* attention again and he turned his face to me. "Martial said hi. He hoped you were fine while we weren't here. He'd like to learn *arnis* from you again, he said." I chuckled.

"Sure! Let's do it tomorrow."

Del interrupted, "I can't wait to have a match against you again. Tell Martial that, Phil."

"Martial, Del said he can't wait to fight you again."

'TELL HIM I'M NOT SCARED EVEN HE'S OLDER!'

I laughed at it. I kinda like it when my brothers are testing each other. "He said he's not afraid of you, Del."

"Ha! We'll see tomorrow."

In a moment of silence and as we continued eating, I was listening to the news.

*"President Washington United States of America had finally revealed his current status with President Moskva Russia. He said that it was Sir Russia that forced to break up from him. Mr. America said, as a reply, that he expected the **force** anyway because Sir Russia is a dictator. We*

haven't heard words from the Russian president about it."

I began to be in my thought.

Russia and America had this big fight just after the Second World War. America told me that he's mad at Russia because he is too dependent on his dad, Soviet. Well, after years or months, they told the world that, finally, they're friends... That is after Mr. Soviet's death. About a year again, they were dating!

And this. Another fight again.

Man, I'm afraid the world will be involved in this again. They're superpowers, in fact.

"See? I once told you gay relationships won't last long." *Papa* said suddenly and it made me go out from my thoughts. I recalled that time that he actually said it.

He is against same sex relationships. He found it disgusting and unholy. But, everytime he said something against people who is in that kind of relationship, I feel offended for them.

To be honest, Del told me he had an interest with a guy and they were dating for few months now. I felt nervous for him. I knew how much *papa* hated gay people. He might hurt Del if he find out about that. So, like how we carefully keep my secret from the world, I kept his secret from him.

"*Hay naku*. I'm lucky my sons aren't like those people."

Del choked on his food. He coughed it out suddenly. He drank his water while he look at *papa* talking. "Sorry *po*. I got choked. I ate fast."

Papa sighed. "Isn't it ridiculous a man would be attracted to a **man**?! What kind of eyes does he has?!"

I secretly flinched. I don't think Del can handle hearing these.

"They're sinful. And very inappropriate in public. And pride?! They want kids to witness such relationship?! How can they reproduce,

then?!"

I and Del went silent.

But really. I feel bad for my brother. I really wish *papa* won't find out. I can't imagine what he might do to him.

I think his thoughts are wrong. I don't agree either. We shouldn't restrict anyone from loving someone! If they are happy being with someone who they think would understand them, then let them be. You wouldn't die when they kiss anyway. Unless, you're jealous.

"You, three. Phil, tell this to Martial too. ***Don't be like them, okay?*** Those are just temporary relationships. They are driven by lust."

I just nodded slowly.

"*Opo, pa.*" Del answered.

We went back in silence again.

*Alters can
fall in love...*

"BREAKING NEWS: President Beijing China proclaimed that, from now on, the Nine Dash Line is no longer in effect..."

"What?!" I was shocked to hear that.

I stood up from my seat and rushes to the living room to watch the news. I saw China in the TV. He was being interviewed. I just heard something *strange*. I gotta listen to this carefully to know if I wasn't mishearing a detail.

I listened to what China said in front of the microphones.

*"The Nine Dash Line is removed. I'll let the Southeast Asian countries have their part on the sea. The South China Sea will be what's the remaining. My fellow Asians down there on the map, from now on, **fear no more.** The Nine Lines are gone."*

♡□□□□♡

A|N

HAHA! YES, I WROTE THIS 'TIL MIDNIGHT! WHY NOT?!

Thank you for the comments and votes anyway. Man, i'll be interactive as I can!

Please be reminded that this is a sequel of UNKNOWN CONNECTIONS FROM THE PAST. There are details there that are connected in this book.

Sorry for this by the way. I tried to make it wholesome as I can. In fact, I haven't written anything sweet. I always have angst and sadness and pain in my mind.

Yes, i am mentally unstable. :')

But anyways. Let's all have fun in this story.

Chapter Six

"... The Nine-Dash Lines are gone."

This isn't a joke, right?!

I... I'm not dreaming. I can't be dreaming, right?!

I have both of my hands on the side of my head while I look straight at the TV with my widened eyes. "Martial Law, what did you do?!"

'What?! What happened?!'

"What did you do to China?! H-He's pulling the Nine-Dash line back! What did you tell him?!"

'Nothing! I-I only--'

"He wouldn't change his mind this fast if you hadn't told him anything! What did you do?!"

'I told him about my plan on befriending him?'

I covered my mouth. "Did he agree on that?"

'Well,' he paused for a second, 'he didn't tell if he agreed on it. He started asking me who I am after I told him that.'

I feel strange. What makes China change his mind like that?

Again. America said China will get what he wants whatever the cost... and now, he just gave up on them, the West Philippine Sea and the islands.

Suspicious.

This can be his plan maybe.

China is smart. I shall not forget that.

I winced as a lot of thoughts came rushing into my head. I rubbed my fingers on my chin and narrowed my eyes. *What is he planning? Manipulate us?*

How the fuck can my brother trust my enemy that much? Is it really true China came to me to help last night? Is he really that convincing?

Hmm. China, you're getting better and better, huh?

"Phil, you're not done with your food!" *Papa* shouted from the table.

What if *papa* asked me about this? He never wanted me to be in a stronger country again. He kept reminding me to be careful about trusting. If I tell *papa* that Martial told China to be friends with him, he'll probably get mad at my brother, then hit him with a bamboo stick AND I'll go to the office with bruises again!

Why would I give the effort to explain if I can let Martial explain himself?

Tsk! I can feel I'm getting smarter too!

"Hey, Martial."

'I love it when you call me like I'm Google assistant.'

"Hey, uhm. Can you take over?"

'For what?'

"Weeeeell, you gotta explain *papa* about what you and China had discussed... without telling him I got drunk that night, please?"

MARTIAL LAW



"Why can't he just explain it himself? He knew the whole story anyway." I murmured to myself as I fix Phil's outfit before walking back to the kitchen to join papa and Del.

I smiled at my brother and dad as I sit down on Phil's seat.

Every time I take over Phil's consciousness in this house, I feel nervous. I prefer talking to them by telling Phil my reply, then he'll tell me what they'd like to say to me, but it's kinda tiring for Phil too.

I drank the water first. Then, I silently picked up the utensils. Yes, I made sure there'll be no sounds like *cling-clang*. I have been bonding with Phil's family for years since they found out I exist but... I still feel this nervous when I'm around them.

I divided the rice into small servings while I wait for a question to be asked me. It's silent here and it's scaring me.

I haven't felt this way before. To be honest.

Man, what's wrong with trusting China? He isn't that bad.

"So, what did the news say?" Finally, papa questioned me. It's in a calm way, so I can still breathe well.

I turned my face to him. "China's removing the nine-dash line. The lines that show his claim on the sea."

"Oh. That's unbelievable. Surprising."

Why are these people seem hopeless when it comes to China? Is it even surprising to see someone suddenly change and make better decisions when it is what you actually wish for?

"That is what Philip wants. Yet, he doesn't seem happy to hear the declaration from China," I said. Then, I swallowed the food on my

spoon.

"Why is that *daw*?"

"He doubted him... that maybe what the country said isn't true and a part of a SURPRISE ATTACK." I put down my utensils on the plate and continued explaining, "Look, I told China I have this plan to make a friendship between him and Phil FOR PEACE! Maybe, China pulled back the lines as... putting his guards down! China withdraws himself. What's the problem with that?"

"Mar-"

"China isn't that bad, as I see. If he is, he wouldn't come to Philip to help him get up when he was drunk! AND if he didn't consider the words that I told him, he wouldn't come up with something like this! He's been keeping his rights on the sea and now he put them down! What should Philip doubt about?!"

.

The room became silent.

I looked at both my brother and dad who are looking at me too. *Did I say anything... bad?*

"Philip got drunk?"

I suddenly went blank when I heard that from dad. *Did I mention it? I didn't, right?* I would facepalm to myself if I can. Phil told me not to tell him but IT ACCIDENTALLY slipped out of my mouth.

Dear, God. I'm sorry.

I gulped. "He did not?" I looked away and drank water once again. *Shit, I lied.*

"You just said it. China helped him-"

"Yes, he did! H-He was invited by his friends and I don't know how he got drunk!"

"Didn't I always tell you to restrict him from things that might harm you two?"

"Well, both of us didn't know it'll be party-like! They told Phil it would be just a meeting about how they get rid of China!"

"Then, it turned out you became friends with him. That meeting became useless!"

That made me sarcastically smile. "It's my fault, then," I whispered to myself before continuing to eat.

"Ano? Are you whispering something?"

I stopped moving. I slowly breathed. I just made him mad.

"Are you doing that bad manner again, Martial?" *Papa* gave a follow-up question.

I didn't look at him. Yes, I feel mad. Both he and Phil are giving sermons at me as if I didn't make that friendship plan for peace. *Papa* only notices my mistakes like letting Phil go in that *meeting*. I'm the one who BROUGHT HIM HOME! And I made my move to make peace-- can't they see that?!

Why am I always wrong?

"Sorry," I said and I tried glancing at him. He's serious. *I swear. I did no wrong. I shouldn't be sorry.*

"I trusted you with Phil. We made a promise that the secret won't go out of the country."

"Why can't Phil just protect himself?"

"I am your father. Don't contradict what I said."

What if I do, anyway? I said to my thought.

I muted myself, then. I can feel the rising of my temper. I avoided looking at him. I don't want him to see *clearly* from my face the anger and the denial of the mistake he said I did.

I did no wrong. I did what was best for Philip and the other country. I prevented the war, didn't I?

It's Philip who said he'll go to that meeting. I didn't know they'll go drunk. WHEN I'M NOT IN THE CONSCIOUSNESS, I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.

Sadly, I can only say these words to myself. If I tell them my side, it'll only be considered as *being against the father of the house*. A disrespect.

Where is the freedom there?

I freed Philip from the conquerors. Now, I'm imprisoned in the rules of my family.

Why shouldn't I be known by others? What is with me?

What am I for then? Life support to my brother? A secret weapon?

I heard Del stand up from his chair and brought his plate to the sink. "I'll wash the plates," he said as he turn on the faucet.

I quickly finished my food too.

"Are you two going to sleep here?" *Papa* asked us, but I let Del answer him instead.

"Yeah. We decided to be here for a few days."

"*Nak*."

I turned to face him.

"Let Phil talk to China about their situation."

I just looked at him, not giving my response.

"Just... prevent showing yourself too much. You know what impact it might bring to Phil. Okay?"

This is wrong.

"Do you understand, Martial?"

I nodded and looked away.

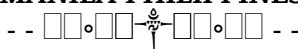
"Why do you look like you don't want what I said?"

I shook my head. "N-No. I understand it *po*."

Though, that left me with a lot of existential questions.



MANILA PHILIPPINES



The next days

In Philippines' office

I'm currently writing a request letter to China. I'd like to ask him to come over for a talk

Papa wanted me to interview him to make sure Martial didn't tell lies. And I'd like to remind him not to tell anyone about what he knew about us.

I was halfway through my letter when someone knocked on my office door. "Come in!" I shouted.

I turned my sight there and saw China in his... looking-new suit. I also noticed his blue necktie. He hasn't worn anything blue. He used to wear the red or yellow ones.

I thought it was just my employees.

"Good day, Philippines." China bowed after placing his hand on his chest.

He's being polite. W-What's going on?

I slid my paper to the side. "I was making a letter for you but now, you're here. Good day, too." I pointed at the seat in front of my table. "Please sit down."

"W-What are we talking about?" He asked.

"About what my brother and you talked about that night I was drunk."

His eyes widened. "Oh, yes! Martial, right?"

My eyes narrowed. *He actually remembered his name.* "Yes," I answered in monotone.

"He's scary to talk with, to be honest. I was thrilled." China chuckled as if he liked that. "But, I think he is such a thoughtful brother of yours."

Do you care? "Yeah. Why did you come here, by the way?"

"I was visiting this place to see if you or Martial is here to talk about his plans for the *friendship* between you and me."

"So, you agreed on it?"

"Yeah! That's why I discarded the Nine-Dash Lines!"

Oh, shit. He agreed to the plan I didn't approve of.

I looked away from him for a moment to think about my questions. Every time China speaks, I turn blank or I forget the things I was thinking of.

"So... the alters cannot hear or see what the other alter can?"

I was surprised by his question. *H-He is questioning my condition.*

What's in his mind?! I really thought he came here for NOT this matter!

"Yes."

I just don't want to start a conversation about myself. So, I gave a serious answer.

"Can I talk to him?"

"No."

My God. He's annoying me. My head cannot process well because of HIM. Can he just shut the fuck up?!

I closed my eyes and prayed for calmness.

"Can I know how you-"

"CHINA. Just..."

I heavily breathed in and slowly exhaled to *calm* myself again. I glared at him and furrowed my eyebrows to show how mad I am at him.

"Just be silent, okay?! I literally forgot what I wanna say!" I massaged the sides of my head and closed my eyes again.

I snapped my fingers when a question finally came back to my mind. "Oh, yes! I have it now." I fixed my posture on my seat and put my hands together on the table. "So uhm, did you really promise Martial you'll be trustworthy?"

"Ah, so you can't hear what the other can hear."

"China, just answer my question!"

"O-Oh. Sorry." China looked passed by me. "Yeah, I did." He smiled. "I took it as an opportunity to be better, to be frank. I can't describe how he convinced me with his words. He was harsh but... I can feel the care and... I-I don't know. I don't know the right words. At first, I thought he was bad but... I felt something *sweet* from him."

We're not doing a testimony, here, China.

"How can someone who wants to take everything from me become thoughtful that you came to help me that night then?"

If he wants a personal question, then go.

It took him a while before he gave his answer. He was looking around him. "Uhm, you were vomiting that night."

"So?"

"I came to help?"

"No other intentions?"

"Of course, no!"

A defensive answer, is it?

"I don't know." I leaned back in my seat. "I don't know if you're lying or not. But you sound defensive."

China turned silent. I can trace on his face that I'm about to reach the truth. He must be thinking of other lies or excuses again...

"Did... Didn't Martial tell you I promised?"

"He believed in you. I don't and won't."

He looked down at the ground, looking sad. *Where's his pride?* "I-I'd like to talk to Martial." He glanced at me with his begging eyes.

Yet, I didn't let myself be bent down by that. I remained insensitive. "Look, I don't know what my brother did to you, but you look different than usual. What else did you two talk about?"

I can see his eyes won't be still. "H-H-He said he trusts me like how you trusted your brother, Del. I cannot waste that."

"You're suspicious! You weren't like thus before! You must be acting!"

He bowed again. "B-But... is it wrong to start changing?"

"The China I know won't think like that." I stood up from my seat and crossed my arms. I faced the large window just behind where I sat. I cannot bare watching him like a poor kid in a street.

"Someone like you who grew up from a warfreak family, selfish and *a really smart* one won't think of change because you benefit from those characteristics. What you said is impossible."

"I-I can explain if you want me to... if you could just listen."

I slammed my hand on the desk. "You know, what?! ***Just leave!***" I pointed at the door and glared at him again.

"What's wrong with y-"

"You're annoying me! All this that you're doing are annoying!" I can't hold my anger any longer so I began raising my voice at him.

China moved like a snail. He slowly stood up while his eyes are still looking at me.

"GET OUT, I SAID!"

Then, he started rushing outside.

I never wanted to be rude to anyone.

But now, I'm starting to believe kindness is like a wall of sticks. Weak against the raging storm.

I trusted people too much. To take care of myself and to prevent being conquered again, I must not let my guards down just because someone, who used to be my enemy, is using kind words.

I never regret how I treated him. It's new to me to finally feel stronger than China now that he's being soft, if it's true.

Yet, if it's true, how can Martial change China's mind that fast? How can he trust him as much as we trust Del?

Both of them... are acting differently.

*Alters can
fall in love...*

Chapter Seven

WARNING:

Curse words and other mad words heh.
There's an argument here so uhm... yeah

* * *

BEIJING CHINA

- - □□。□□□□。□□ - -

Hours later

In his apartment

"Why did I become stupid?!" I screamed at myself and slapped my face on both left and right.

So, I've been doing this for hours now. I left my office early to rant at myself.

Currently, I am walking in circles, just like what I was doing in the previous hours. I feel sorry for myself!

Imagine! I just told someone I'm being better than who I was without even doing anything much! How would they really believe me?!

Philip is being untamable now. He won't believe what I was telling him. Gosh, maybe I overshared thoughts in my answer, didn't I? And I asked too much about Martial. Shit, what have I done? I didn't mean to be suspicious!

I gripped on my hair and screamed at myself once again. I pressed the both sides of my head while my eyes were tightly closed. "I'm sorry! I was carried away by feelings!"

Do you even like him, China?

The question popped up in my head.

Do you?

Oh, this is bad. Even myself is against me.

"Why do I overthink like this?! I don't earn money from this overthinking!" I faked my cry to let all the negative feelings out. I knelt down on the ground. "It's not like I like him or anything!"

I covered my mouth in realization. *What if I do?*

"AAAAAAHHH!!!" I gripped my shirt over my chest. "Why am I so brittle?! I am supposed to be strong and manly! Why do I feel so soft?! Am I still scary?! Am I still like you, dad?!" I bent down and had my face on the floor. "Dad, I'm sorry! I don't know what's happening to me either! I'm such a disgrace!"

I rolled myself on the floor and hugged my knees. I feel so weak. My sight was slowly getting blurry and wet. My lips curved downward and began to shiver. *I... I'm crying.*

If my strong, fighter, brave Dad is still here with me, he would hit me with a bamboo stick and scold at me. He would abandon me. He would never see me as his son anymore. He would train someone else!

Luckily, he's dead.

I began to sob loud on the floor. My chest felt heavy that I felt like drowning underwater.

"M-Maybe, change isn't for me," I cried. "I have to keep myself in line. I have to be who I promised to dad-"

I was distracted by knocks on the door.

My eyebrows furrowed in annoyance.

I would ignore it but ***that someone knocked again but louder!***

Who the fuck could it be?!

I forced myself to stand up. I am stomping my feet loud so they can

realize this is not the right time to bother me.

I twisted the doorknob and open-

. . .

Oh.

I became silent when I saw North Korea looking up to my eyes while holding his laptop. He tilted his head and his eyes seemed examining my face.

Shit. I quickly faced away from him and wiped the trails of the tears on my face.

"Who made you cry?" He started with that question.

I pretended I didn't hear that. "Hm?"

"Why did you cry? I know you heard me clear, *yeobo*."

I sighed in defeat. "Fine. Yes, I did cry. Now, why are you here?"

He shrugged. "I went to your office just an hour ago and your employees said you took your leave early. I was worried, so I went here!" He looked inside the apartment. "Can I go in?"

I can't say no to this man. He is one of my weaknesses. He acts like dad. The strictness, the worrying, the scolding. He's definitely like dad.

I let him walk in and closed the door. I sat on the sofa and placed his laptop on the center table.

"Do you want me to prepare something for you?" I asked kindly while my sweating hands were rubbing each other.

"Nah. I want you to tell me what's going on because your answer didn't satisfy my question." Then, he gazed at me.

It felt like he pointed a gun at me. But since he doesn't have one right now, I'm not telling him anything. "Nothing. Just... drama." *An*

excuse.

Korea looked back at the screen. "I didn't know you're into drama."

Is that suspicious again, huh?

I just stood in my position waiting for more attacks from him. I still have my thoughts with me. I kept on thinking of them while looking around us. I won't speak about it... or else Korea will get jealous. You don't want him to be jealous, I'll tell you.

Korea typed things on his laptop and I'm trying to be patient.

"What else would you like me to tell you?"

"Shh." He put a finger on his lips as he shush me.

He shushed me!

He did shush me!

I rolled my eyes upwards and groaned. "Why does almost everybody wants to put me in silence?! Y-Y-You guys want to talk to me then **SHUSHED** ME?!"

"Who else talked to you today?"

. . .

How can he do this to me?

H-He just made me spill something out! No, I didn't even mention I talked to someone. Damn, he is so smart. I am always caught by his traps. Definitely like dad.

I bowed my head. I licked my lips. "I, uh... I had a talk with Philippines."

"You stopped hunting his sea. What else do you have to talk with him?"

"You know I run businesses in his country, right?"

"Yeah. But your businessmen handle them, right? You told me that."

Ack. Yes, I did. Shit.

"I'll ask again. What else do you have to talk with him?"

"Are you jealous?"

"No. I'm more like worried. It's so rare for you to leave your work early and LOOK what that country did to you! I saw you crying!"

"I-I did not."

"China, *yeobo*, stop lying! You said you did!"

"ENOUGH, OKAY?!"

He stood up from his seat quick. "I did no wrong for you to shut me up! I am your *boyfriend* and I am ordered to watch over you!"

I turned away from him as I run my fingers on my hair. "Just because you're my boyfriend, it doesn't mean you have to know all the SECRETS I have!"

"Well, I didn't ask for your secret..."

I hissed. I just closed my eyes and pressed my head again. I gripped on my hair. *Tā mā deeeeeeeee!! Stupid. Idiot. A disgrace. A loser.* I hit my head with my wrist as I tell myself the hate words I *deserve*.

"Are you hiding something from me, hmm?"

"I-I don't, okay?! W-What I meant there is that you don't have to know everything from me!"

"I'd like to he-"

"I can handle myself!" I am aware of my mistakes! I am aware of what's happening to me! I am aware I am being such a trash everyday! Just... stop talking to me for now!"

I began sobbing again.

I cried all the heaviness and the hate out. My tears won't stop going out from my eyes. I covered my face with my arm and wiped these tears.

...

...

I heard North Korea sigh behind me. He patted my back. "Is this about... *Martial* again?"

Cào [*Fuck*].

"Ever since you started talking about him, you get annoyed quickly and silent sometimes. You're always in your thoughts. **Who is he?**"

I shook my head. "N-No one."

Didn't I tell him to stop? Didn't he realize I want to be alone for now? He's stressing me out.

"If he's no one, then you're crying because of an illusion?"

"North Korea, just stop, okay? I'll be fine. I don't need you this time." I forced myself not to raise my voice on him. I told him that as calm as I can so he could understand. I turned my back at him and headed to my room. I was wiping my tears off my face and sniffing.

"You're acting really different now. You don't called me North Korea unless you're mad and stressed."

Here goes the guessing again. This is getting more tiring.

"You used to need me! I-I'm able to calm you down!"

I shut my door close and locked it. I massaged my forehead and tried to ignore what he's saying.

I heard his footsteps going near to my door. Korea shouted there. "If that person made Philip say no to you, maybe he made you say no to me too!" He knocked on the door. "China, open this! I badly want

to help you!"

"Leave me alone. Please. I want to be with myself."

"***Who is this person and why can't you tell me about him?!***" I heard a loud thud on the door. "***Ssi-bal!*** [Fuck!]" I realized he just kicked my door.

...

...

There was a moment of silent. *Finally, some peace.* I didn't hear him go out of my apartment. He can still be here.

I sighed.

I rested myself on my bed.

I closed my eyes and exhaled again.

I felt tired. I almost feel nothing now. I even forgot why I cried.

Oh, yes. I remember it now.

I was confused with myself. I don't understand me. I had experienced drowning into negativities again. I felt hate just minutes ago.

And then, here's Korea being so annoying. Luckily, I never spit anything about Martial. I would be dead if I did. I understand his concern but I'd rather fix this myself because **THIS IS** my mistake.

I just want my mind to go blank for an hour so I could *truly* rest.

...

Suddenly, my phone vibrated. It surprised me, actually. I forgot I have my phone with me.

Even though, I'm lazy to pick it up but *who the heck will call me at this time?* It's so late if this is about work.

I got it from my pocket and looked at the screen. A contact named *Philippines* and has a profile of his flag are what I saw.

I sat up on the bed and rubbed my eyes. I cleared my throat, so Philip won't think I cried. I licked my lips before sliding an icon to answer the call.

What would this call be about?

"H-Hi, Philip- pines. Philippines, rather. I-I'm sorry about how I talked earlier. I'm sorry if I made you feel uncomfortable. Why did you call?"

He chuckled.

No.

Not the friendly chuckle. It didn't sound like a friendly one.

I know how Philip does a chuckle even though he doesn't do it much.

*"Yeah, why would Phil
call you?"*

I didn't speak to process those words and the voice in my mind. Then, I covered my mouth in realization.

I-I thought it's Philip, so I thought of apologizing before he even speak.

But then...

*"It took me a lot of times
to beg Philip to let me
take over."*

. . .

*"I asked him how's your
talk with him but he said
you became a shit*

earlier."

Please don't remind me. I rubbed my forehead.

*"I'd like to know what you
did to him... from you. I
want to witness what
has become different in
you."*

What does that me-

*"Hoi, why are you silent?
Hello?"*

"H-Hi. I-I'm still here."

He laughed again. Man, it's making me weak. Help me.

*"Why are you speechless?
You weren't like that before."*

He chuckled.

In other breathe, I gathered myself together. "I-I'm good."

*"Let's meet in South Korea's
bar. Are you free? I missed
having a drink with you, to
be honest."*

"Sure! Why not?"

*"Okay! I'll see you there!
Bye!"*

He turned down the call.

I put my hand on my mouth again and think. I was just invited for a drink by someone who they said that changed me.

But... South Korea? What if South Korea will tell North that I'm

with this someone? He might find out. Martial and his brother might get in danger.

I can just not appear there but... I already said yes to Martial. I hope he knows what he's doing. I don't want him to be in trouble.

I stood up and felt my blood flowing quick in my veins. I feel... hyped! I even stretched my arms up! I would jump! I would scream!

I squeezed my cheeks to calm myself down but my face were warm!

What have you done to me, Martial?!

I quickly took off my polo shirt and let my white T-shirt remain. I picked up my jacket and rushed outside.

"Finally!" North Korea said as he saw me go out of my room. I ignored him. "Hey, where are you going?" He said as he follows me to the door out of my apartment.

I turned to face him. I can still see the *jealousy* on him.

I don't feel... anything when I see him. It's like he's nothing to me. We did kisses and sex before but... they don't mean to me *much*. They're nothing.

It's like I don't value him like how I don't to dad.

"Work."

"What? Who would work with you at seven o'clock?!"

"Pyongyang North Korea! For fucking sake, shut the fuck up and I don't want to see you in my place AGAIN!"

I know he doesn't like to be called by his first name. He was muted by me. Finally. I did say **no** to him. Finally. I can deny to his words.

This is what I badly want to do with dad. I don't want to be controlled or be under anyone.

I want to decide for myself.

"Please stop worrying about me." I told him.

. . .

"H-How can you shout at me like I did nothing good to you?"

"I don't know either... okay? I was unable to think well these days.
But what I'm sure about is that... *I never loved you.*"

♡□□□□♡

A|N

I rushed this sorry. I crammed the damn chapter HUAHAHAHAHAHA

sorry- At least the drama is there HAHHAHAHAHA

Chapter Eight

*Hello, hello, baby
You called, I can't hear a thing
I have got no service
In the club, you see, see*

*Wha-wha-what did you say?
Oh, you're breaking up on me
Sorry, I cannot hear you
I'm kinda busy*

(Telephone by Lady Gaga)

* * *

[19:36, *Philippine Time*]

I felt relieved when I left the house. Currently, I'm riding a taxi to South Korea. I am resting myself on my seat and my eyes were close during the trip.

I really hope he'll let me be alone. I hope he left my place.

I remembered shouting at him back there. It must've caused him pain. These years, I did feel Korea's... what he called "love". He did made me feel better sometimes. But, what's with me that I could forget all that? I felt nothing was missing on me when I told him to leave me.

Maybe, I didn't make it to reciprocate his feelings for me. I can't... give it back to him.

"Sir, we're here," said the driver that looked at me through his mirror.

I took a look outside the window and saw the neon lights by the entrance.

I gave the driver a hundred yuan and patted his shoulder. "Thank you." I opened the door for myself and closed it as I stood outside of it.

I looked around the bar. It seemed like there are lesser people here as I expect.

"S-Sir, I don't have a change for this."

I turned back to the driver again. *Ah yes, he's Korean. I forgot about that.*

"How much did I pay again?" I asked.

"100 yuan, sir. Equivalent to 18,000 won. This is too much, sir. 2 yuans will do."

I would laugh at him. *100 yuan's a small amount for me!* "Nah, just take it with you."

"But-"

"Take it with you, I said. I don't have anything else to give you. Buy your wife and your children some things with that. Go on."

I waited for a reaction from his face. He was speechless. He can't even smile at me. He looked up to me, "Th-Thank you, sir." And it seemed like he has more to say but he can't put it to words. "I, uh... This is a big help, sir."

"You're welcome. That's just a small amount of me. Just enjoy your life, okay?"

I turned away from him and hurriedly left before he even say another word.

Hm-mm. So, South Korea's bar.

I walked inside it and looked around the place. The walls are black but there were warm lights and colorful lasers. People from different countries were here. There were some from here, Japan... there are some from Russia too. Oh, from America too. I can distinguish them because they have flags on their faces too.

This isn't my first time being here. I had been here with North before.

I went to the counter to buy some drink while waiting for Martial, if he's still not here.

I just sat on a tall seat when the bartender greeted me, "Oi! Pres!" This man knew me. He can even recognize me when there's a lot of people who look like me. *Heh.*

"Hi."

"Oh! Somebody actually came here and asked me to tell you that he's gonna sit there." He pointed at the table in the back, left corner. I adjusted my head to see that seat.

"Do you know who it is?" I asked.

"Nope! He's wearing shades and hoodie. I didn't see his flag well. Sorry, mate."

Who else would like to meet me who hated to be recognized by other people?

I faced him back and said, "Alright! I'll sit there, then."

I walked to that seat while looking still looking around. I'm examinig if there are people in this corner. Yet, I see not much here.

On a table, there's someone who sits on sofa chair with a high backrest. I can only see his head. I walked closer to see him but he

faced and smiled at me first when I got near him.

What a relief. It's him.

"Hey! You made it here!" Martial offered me his hand for a handshake.

I smiled back at him and placed my hand over his as we handshake. "Of course! Why wouldn't I?" I sat on the seat opposite to him. I have to start lightening up my mood so it wouldn't be obvious I was crying.

"I was waiting for you. I've been here minutes after I called you!"

"Ah, I had a problem before leaving the house." I laughed nervously.

I looked around us again, actually avoiding an eye contact. *The light we have here is beautiful, hm? There were dividers too. No one will actually see us here.*

"Are you nervous again?"

"M-Me?" I quickly gave him my attention again. "No, I'm not."

"Liar. You can't even look at me." He chuckled.

I feel like melting when he talks like a strict teacher at me.

He slammed his hand on the table. "Hey! Philip said you told him you wanted to talk to me."

I nodded slowly. "Yeah, I di-"

"And you asked him thrice!" *I-Is it bad?* "Why? Why do you want me that bad?" *No, I don't.* "What do you want us to talk about?"

"A-"

"Actually, I made this meeting to grant your wish!"

"Ye-"

"Man, Philip is being like an old brother to me! Again, it took me a

lot of times to beg him to give you a chance!"

"Oh-"

"And he was like, *Okay! Just make sure you'll tell me what you guys will talk about. I want to know if my guesses about him are right because we aren't sure if he is indeed manipulating us.*" He slammed his hand again on the table and laughed loudly. "He also said you were suspicious because you're asking questions related to multiple personality disorder!"

"I-"

"What's up with you, huh?"

I actually hate when I'm being halted to speak. But I kinda like it when it's him. I ignored what he did. "I was just curious. I want to know more about it so I could be more careful around you two."

He rested himself on the backrest. "Philip wouldn't believe you if you told him that."

"Yaaaah. I know."

He clapped his hands once. "I'll buy us a drink *pala*."

I pulled his arm to make him sit down before he can even leave. "No! Let me buy us that."

"No, no. I have money with me."

"I have some, too!"

Then, we laughed at each other.

"Come on! Let me buy! It's just a bottle of beer!"

"Uh-huh. You know it's dangerous for you to be in public, right? What if you'll get lost?"

Martial narrowed his eyes. "You care, daddy?"

MĀ DE! NÁ SHÌ YĪZHÈN QIÁNGFÈNG! [OH SHIT! THAT WAS A

STRONG WIND!] HE EVEN SMIRKED AT ME! *Nà gǎnjué jiù xiàng yī kē zǐdàn jí zhòng le wǒ de xīn!* [It felt like a bullet hit my heart!]

"Heh. I see words like that makes you weak."

"N-No! I have no weakness!"

"Liar. You stuttered!"

"I'll buy the drink. Stay here." I stood up from my seat first and rushed away from our table.

I heard him say, "Alright, dad!

I would giggle while walking back to the counter. I was secretly smiling because I was holding back my smiles and laughs since I sat IN FRONT OF HIM.

He hit me 100%...

This is bad.



[19:51, *Philippine Time*]

I went back to our seat while holding a bottle of my... I can say, favorite beverage. *20% alcohol won't hurt much, right?*

I grinned back at Martial when he saw me coming and smiled. I put the bottle on the table and two wine glasses for us.

"What's that? I thought you'll buy *lambanog*."

"Oh. I... don't know that." I explained, "This is yellow wine. One of my favorites."

"Ah! I think I tried one with that name too. I'm not sure if it's yellow wine."

I sat down on the seat. "Maybe, it's the rice wine."

His eyes widened and a finger pointed at me. "YES! I tried that

because Philip said it is *rice* and it's not much strong for him."

"This wine has 20% alcohol. Stronger than the rice wine. The rice wine is *bahh*! It's just a water to me." I twisted the cap of the wine and opened it. I poured our glasses until its half-filled.

"So, what do you want us to talk about?"

I slid the glass to him. "I want to hear further details about the friendship between me and Philip... or you." I chuckled.

Martial picked up his glass. "Philip actually got mad at me because I told you daw about it without his consent."

"Oh, can you tell me more?" I drank my drink then as I wait for his explanation.

He drank his too. "Well, he still doubts you even if you pulled back the nine-dash line. My brother overthinks a lot, sorry." He took a sip. "My dad *naman* said I have to control myself from taking over. Ha! Dude, what should I do, then?! Be Philip's imaginary friend?! A secret weapon that will help Philip when he's in trouble?" He drank is glass empty while gazing at me. He chuckled. "Sorry. Drunk talks."

"It's fine. Go on."

"Who wouldn't get mad?!" He poured himself another shot. "I am the brother but we have our *OWN* do's and don't's. Why?! Where's the equality there? Man! Everything might be better if no one knew I exist!"

"You-"

"I am trying to help Philip here. I and Philip have the same goal: *Not to let him get conquered again!*" He adjusted his head closer. "Hey. Tell me you aren't planning to take him, right? No, right?"

I quickly shook my head. "No! Didn't I tell you I'll be worthy of your trust? So, I won't break that!"

"I KNOW!"

"Yeah! If you trusted me I won't hurt your brother, I won't, really!"

"I know that! I believe you! God! Why is Philip overprotecting himself?! And dad took his side! What the actual fuck?! I told him if ever you did something to him, he can blame me! Isn't that enough to, at least, put his weapons down?!"

I poured my glass after I drank the drink in it. "You have a dad issue, then?"

"OH, HELL YEAH! Ever since he knew about me, he's been telling me not to take over much. That's annoying. I feel useless when I hear it from him. It felt like I want to tell him to not go out of his house too." He laughed.

"Well, in my case, dad didn't want me to do anything else but conquer Asia."

"Oh, wow! Really? Who's your father again?"

"Qing Dynasty."

"Ohhhh! What did he do? What did he do?"

"He is known for... expanding his empire in Inner Asia."

"A war freak."

"Yes. Definitely, a war freak. He wanted me to be like him. But, I actually decided to be different from him like... I made my land not an empire but a republic. I got into businesses. I only maintain my ownership on what is ours. So, that's why I was really strict on the South China Sea."

"And you put your hands off it."

"Yeah. Then, I was worried to myself earlier because I'm failing my father again."

. . .

We were both in silence for a moment.

"So, you want to be free from..."

"My father's words? Hell, yes." I continued his question.

Martial looked away from me and showed a sad smile. "Same. I want freedom, China."

"Same here. I always worry on the things I do because... I lived almost my whole life with my father always watching over me."

"I always wonder what's wrong with me because they don't to show me around the world! Why do we have to follow their words?! We aren't kids!"

"I have the same thought."

He laughed at me as he put down his empty glass. "Mutuals, then?"

"I guess." I laughed back and drank my glass empty too.

"Do you imagine what we could do if it's just us doing what the heck we want?"

"I could be a successful businessman and a trustworthy help for developing countries."

"Woi! That's cool! I want to travel the world and spread strictness and awareness of the law in people's places. I want countries to use me to discipline! Discipline shall be learned! I want to do that not only here in this place but OUTSIDE this place."

I was amazed by it. I, who was under the care of another strict person in my life, the USSR, missed the experience of disciplining people. I believe he'll do it differently. "Wait. You're Martial Law. Isn't that what that law is for?"

"Yeah. But since I don't take over much, unless my brother needs me, I don't know how to do it well. Phil wants me to sow the KINDEST I could give."

"I'd like to see what else you can do." I curved my lips to smile before drinking my wine.

There was another silent moment... but we're looking at each other's eyes.

"Now, that excites me to do what I haven't done."

♡□□□□♡

A|N

2.2k words huhu

*If I wasn't listening to Lady Gaga's song, I wouldn't think of all of this so
yea HAHAHAHAHAHA*

Chapter Nine

WARNING

A lot of time skips

* * *

[20:30, Philippine Time]

"ANNYEONG, SEGYE!!"

We were distracted with the crowd shouting and screaming as South Korea greeted them happily. The neon lights started to move around. The people there started to raise their hands.

The party just started, then.

Martial patted my hand. "Hey, hey, hey! Let's go there and party with them!"

"A-Aren't you tired yet? I'm afraid you'll collapse there like how Philip did on Vietnam's place."

He waved his hand downwards. "Nah! My alcohol tolerance is way higher than his." He wrapped his hand around mine. "Let's go!"

While I stand, Martial pulled his hoodie up and wore it on his head. He held my hand and pulled me to the crowd. We stayed behind them because people started pushing each other as South played a loud music.

What's different in is bar from the other bars I went in is that this is intended for people in the age range of 18-25. No pole dancers and no slow music for... pole dancers. South Korea wanted to entertain younger people with his dance music.

My phone vibrated again in my pocket. It's North Korea. Look, I just had my mind away from problems, and now it's back. I wonder what he's up to again.

I sighed when I answered it.

"Hello. What is it again?"

*"Why can I South Korea's
music there? Are you in
his bar?!"*

"Here we go again..."

*"I was about to say sorry to
you. I ended up finding
out you lied!"*

"That's what you like to
do, anyway! Stalking me!"

*"And you're mad?! You did a
mistake! Why can't we just
breakup, then?! I hate what
you're acting these days!!"*

I expected it coming. It didn't bother me to be honest.

"Didn't we break up when
we're talking an hour ago?"

" . . . "

"Hm. Now you're silent."

North Korea would say words he's gonna regret later. If he's mad, he says hate words at me. If he's sad, he says promises. Then, they'll be regretted after being said.

I'm tired of it.

"Ch-China, hon-"

"Ha! Don't *honey* me.
You said it, so let's be it."

"No, no, no-"

"I'm busy! I cannot hear
you well! Gotta go!"

And I turned down the call.

I felt relieved for another time today. Now, there's no North Korea
coming after me because we're done.

"BEIJING CHINA!"

I quickly looked around to find Martial in this crowd when I heard
him call me. He's laughing at me when I saw him.

"What's happening to you?! Don't you dare space out in this place!"
I held my hand and pulled me in the group of people. "Let's go in
front so you won't be in mind."

Ah... we'll see what'll happen this time.



[21:16, Philippine Time]

*I like you
'coz you got that something
that I need in my life
so, give it to me*

Isn't the music has too much bass? Agh, it's making my head
explode!

The people are getting louder. Martial began jumping with them
and shout, "**OI! OI! OI! OI!**" He did weird dances, too. Like,
bending his back up and down. Oh, God. I cannot describe how he
did his weird steps.

Help me. I'm too old for this.

Martial held my hands and smiled at me. I noticed his glasses aren't
on him anymore. That made me panic that I pulled him close to me.

I looled around us. *What if somebody saw him?*

He tried resisting me so I let him part away from me. "Yo, what's the problem? Gonna suffocate me?"

"Y-Your glasses-"

"Bah! There were colored lights around anyway. No one will see the colors." He smiled at me... which washed my worries away.



[21:45, Philippine Time]

"WOH! LOOK AT THAT!" Martial pointed at the person holding a long, slim glass and drinking from it.

As I examine it, it looks like the one I'm using as a flower vase at home.

He shook my arm. "I WANT TO HAVE A CONTEST AGAINST THEM!"

"The heck? You can't drink that much!"

"Hmmm! Daddy's worried for me! Come on! Let me try it!"

I sighed in defeat. *I trust your alcohol tolerance.*



[22:20, Philippine Time]

I just worriedly watch him play with the kids around him.

He's taking so many drinks in that amount.

He lost and won against the man taking up the challenge on who's gonna drink the long glass empty the fastest.

So far, he seems good. I heard the alcohol they're drinking isn't that strong. I hope they won't do anything shit on him.

I'm just here, watching over my son.

"Good evening, sir." A woman holding a tray of drinks greeted me.

I didn't say a word but I just looked at her.

She picked up a glass from her tray and handed it to me.

To brush off my boredom, yes, I have to drink. When the woman left, I took a sip on it. I became surprised when the drink worked like mint on my tongue and burned as it flow to my insides.

Is this whiskey?!



[22:41, Philippine Time]

"That's it, Martial! That's enough!" I came to him when I saw him getting out of his balance.

I took a chance to taste the drink in that long glass. In a few seconds, I realized this tasted like the drink the woman gave me.
Whiskey's too strong for him!

I was about to wrap my arm around him to help him get up and he was pushing me away. "No. I'm good. I still haven't fin-"

"OI! TIME'S UP! YOU LOSE THIS TIME, MARTIAL!"

I turned my face at that man who said his name with furrowed eyebrows because I wasn't expecting that coming. "How the fuck did you get his name?"

"He said it."

Did he just put himself in danger?!

"Agh, fuck. I missed the 5 dollars." Martial said as he tried to stand up on his own.

I still helped him. "Hey, you need to go home. You're drinking too much."

Suprisingly, he dropped his hand on the table and left money there.
"I BET A THOUSAND PESOS! I'LL DRINK ANOTHER ONE!"

I scratched my head. *No wonder why Phil doesn't want him to go out...*



[23:05, Philippine Time]

I actually don't like the view I'm seeing now.

This place is a torture. Hell.

I'm sitting by the counter while my eyes are on Martial Law, whose arm are on another man in the bar. He's still having fun with those men, then flirting at girls with them.

I cannot stop him.

I'm just waiting for Philip to take over but it seems like he doesn't care for now.

I watched the group of girls who just approached him and one of gave him a glass... with a slice of lemon on it. He took it from her and laughed first before finally drinking it.

Now, they're getting near him.

Some of them came with the other boys, but there's this one who actually went REALLY close to him.

I feel bad about this.



[23:14, Philippine Time]

I hurriedly came back to Martial and pulled the girl away from him.

I just saw her flood his face with her kisses. That irritated me.

Martial fell on the floor. When I pulled his hand and put my hand on his back to support him from standing up, I just knew he's

sweating hell. His face is hot. His eyes look sleepy.

This man is heavily drunk.

"Please help yourself up," I told him and I tried to pull him up again.

"Hmnggh... I feel... hot..."

. . .

Damn.

Fuck.

China, no.

No, China. Don't think that way.

Calm your goddamn gay ass.

I pulled him up and put his arm around my neck. I helped him walk, even though, because of his weight, we both were losing our balance.

Suddenly, he put his hand on my stomach... which quickly put effect on me. It sent so many butterflies in me. Then, I felt like being electrified by it. I slapped his hand away. "Don't touch me!"

"Ohhhh~ Sorry, daddy~"

. . .

China... I said... we're taking him to his office, okay?



[23:47, Philippine Time]

I decided to bring him to my mansion instead. I have no idea if North finally left my apartment.

This is my fault anyway that I let him get drunk like that. I'll take

responsibility of him.

He isn't that heavy, so I carried him up inside my place. Luckily, I did a guest room in the ground floor.

I put him straight to my bed where he could sleep comfortably.

He is complaining about how hot he felt. He even reached his buttons to open his shirt. I opened the aircon for him.

I rushed outside to get a pail where he could vomit and a glass of water just in case he needs it. I placed the glass on the table beside the bed.

Martial cannot tell much words. I ended up analyzing what else he needs in his actions.

What's weird is that I saw him rubbing his legs together. *Does he feel irritated by his pants? Should I take it off from him?*

. . .

China, what?

I gently slapped my face to remove my thoughts from me. *Oh God, China, stop it. Stop it.*

"Hmnggh... i-it's hot..."

I rubbed my palm on my face. I'm not sure how to get rid of this. "I uh... I gotta leave you be here. I turned on the aircon for you." This scene is actually making me feel nervous.

I don't really know what had happened to him. If he's only drunk, he could easily fall asleep, or start groaning and vomiting but he isn't.

. . .

He felt hot.

He's rubbing his legs.

He was with girls... AND boys earlier.

So...

. . .

I covered my mouth in realization. "No, no, no," I said to myself.
"This can't be..."

This shouldn't go further.

I should leave.

Nothing should go further, no.

"B-Beijing... honey..."

The call made me shiver. Oh, my blood rushed in my veins again. I felt cold, then warm. *Martial Law, stop. Please don't make me **do** it.*

"He- Help me. I feel hot..."

I was about to head outside. With worries, I faced back to him. He won't stop whinning on the bed.

Now, I started to feel lusted by just watching him moving on the bed.

I slowly walked closer at him.

I gulped before even bending down close to him.

I saw him weakly smiled. "S-Sleep with me."

I moved away but he quickly reached my hand and pulled me back to him.

"P-Please..."

"No, Martial Law! I obeyed what you want back in the bar! I'm not doing what you want!"

"I haven't said anything yet. Don't overreact..."

Oh shit. He got me. Oh no no no.

I saw his eyes look down to my chest, then back to my eyes. "Do you have an idea what I want you to do..?"

I shook my head, unsurely.

"Liar." He smirked at me. "Kiss me..."

"No. No, Martial, no."

"Pleeeaaase..."

I felt defeated again. Oh, his begging eyes are so cute.

I can feel his hand went to my back. I think he's attempting to slowly pull me closer. I have to think quick. I am having second thoughts.

I might lose Philip's trust if I do this. I might not have the friendship I've been working on these days.

But, this will surely happen once. Martial is heavily drunk. He could forget all this tomorrow.

But, what if Phil take over?

He won't. If Phil tries to take over in this weakened body, he will just pass out.

And... I think Martial wants to do **it**...

I smiled back at him. "If you insist... then, I will."

I bent down closer to him. My lips landed on his soft ones.

♡□□□□♡

A|N

Sorry for republishing this part- I'm making this one the Chapter 9. I removed the real Chapter 9 'coz YES.

It has the highest reads among the chapters I have with this book. And I don't want chapters that have scenes like that... here in this book because the focus is uhm.... being forgotten. BUT NVM.

That's what I wanna say. I deleted it >:'D

The No No Part

WARNING:
The climax.

*I wanna be sorry if this won't be as satisfying as the other smut fanfics
you have read. BUT I TRIED MY BEST.*

*Make your decisions wisely. This is not necessary to read. But, if you
want, then go on UwU*

Enjoy~

* * *

I parted away from his lips. I caressed them as Martial gives me a weak smile.

"Permission to take off your clothes, general," I teased, followed by

a chuckle. Yes. I know he's one of the generals of the Philippine Army. I had stalked him before.

"Permission granted, *mahal ko* [my love]." His voice was airy. It made my insides shiver. I was pulled out of my mind by his voice that sticks like honey in my ears.

I crawled on the bed and went over him. I unbuttoned his shirt and pulled it and his white T-shirt from him. There was limited light in this room. I can barely see his body. His waist is way similar to what women have. Slim. Sexy.

Gosh, *this feeling...* I cannot deny it forever. I always feel alighted every time I see him. I become different when I'm with him. I think in an unusual way because of him. He's the coffee that softened me by his warmth.

Martial... Martial, I think I love you. You're the caffeine that makes me stay up all night. You're the aphrodisiac that turns me on.

I held his waist and pulled him closer to my hips. I bent down again to continue kissing him, deeply. I held his chin. He opened his lips for me, so I slid my tongue inside him and rubbed it against his. I caressed his warm face. I put my hand behind his neck and pulled him to make me go even deeper.

He hummed. He moaned. The best part is when he is breathing out my name.

I gave him a light kiss on his lips before parting away from him.

I went to his neck and planted my kisses and bites on it. My hand stayed on his face. My thumb went in her mouth and let him lick him. Man, his tongue's doing a good job, making me think this isn't his first time. I licked his neck and whispered in his ear, "*Sir, I'd like to make you mine~*"

"Th-Then, do, China~" he said softly.

I moved downwards and started unbuckling his belt, unzipping his pants and pulling it from him together with his boxers. I grinned when I saw his erected member.

I leaned closer to it and gave it a lick.

"A-Auhh~!"

I chuckled when I heard his reaction.

I teased him by licking its tip and Martial hums as a response. I looked up to him and saw him biting his lip and gripping on the bedsheets. I just smiled and went back to his member.

I sucked it whole and moved my head up and down as I rub my tongue against it. Martial wrapped his leg around me and was moaning as I did my move.

I held his legs and spread them apart. I began licking his hole and inserting my finger inside him. I smiled. *I missed the tightness.* I parted away when I thought he was stretched enough.

I pulled off my pants and discarded them on the floor. I watched him pant on my bed. Soft whines escape from his mouth.

I leaned back to him for another passionate kiss. Martial wrapped his arms around my neck, pulling me closer. *Why is he this needy? Has he ever wished this to happen to him?*

No. This can be the effect of the aphrodisiac the people made him take.

I wiped her hair, wet due to his sweating, away from his forehead. "Are you okay, darling?" I asked him with true concern.

He hummed. "Hm-mngh, honey~" He held and pulled my hand. He sucked my thumb again. *Oh, his warm tongue melts me.* I let him do what he wanted until he stopped to let me proceed.

I went back down. I spread his legs again and put them on my shoulders. I knelt and pointed my member at his hole.

I slowly thrusted in.

"O-Oh~! Oh~! Oh, *shit.* It hur- Hmmm~"

I just got my half in.

I stopped when I heard him react like that. Martial's looking down at me.

Now, I started hesitating to continue.

He was breathing heavily as he was biting his finger.

I waited for a signal from him.

. . .

"Go on, China..."

"A-Are you sure? It might hurt for y-"

"I liked it, China. You should've continued."

I stretched my lips to the side. *A masochist, then.* "Is that an order, sir?" I teased while smirking down to him.

"I said, continue, Chi- **Oooohhh~!** Auh, fuck~!"

I finally got myself in. "Does it hurt?"

Martial shook his head. "It felt good~"

I slowly moved my hips. He softly moans every time I thrust in. I bit my lower lip when I felt his insides were getting tighter.

I decided to go a little faster. I know he would like it more. I bent down, placed my hands down on the bed and started thrusting faster.

I breathed heavily and fast as well. I held his waist and slammed him against my thighs.

"Ahh~! Shit~! Hmm, yes~!" Then, he did a long moan.

I put down his one leg and carried the other. I thrust deeper and quicker as I could. I watched him bend his back and groan. **"Ohh~ Fuuuuuuuck~!"** He hummed louder.

I slapped his butt cheek. "Ya like that, darling~?"

"Hm-mmmmmngh~! I do, honey~ Ahaa~! P-Please, *sige paaa~*
[*more~*]"

So, I didn't stop. I went to the slow phase to kiss him again. Then, I went back to getting rough.

After a few more thrusts, I felt myself coming out.

Martial began jerking off, rubbing his hand around his member. I guess his about to come out too.

"Auhh~ I.. I'm- Mngh~"

"Cumming, honey?"

"Y-Yeah~! Haa~ Keep going~!"

So, I went back moving fast for him.

"Want me to cum outsi-"

"I-In, China~! I-In- **A-Ahhh~~!!**"

I licked my lip as I kept myself inside him while my semen came out in him. I squeezed his thigh. It's getting tight again in him.

I slowly pulled myself out, leaving him panting on my bed. I bent down to caress his face. Martial rubbed his face on my hand.

We... We did it. I-It all happened so fast. God, I hope Philip won't suddenly take control of him. I hope he'll do it tomorrow instead.

"I love you, Martial Law..." I said without having any second thought. He has to know what I do. He has to know I changed for him. He has to know I'm doing everything to make him trust me more. He has to know I could always be with him and I'll do everything he'll say.

Yet, seconds passed, I got no response. He must've fallen asleep quick.

. . .

I sighed.

I hope he didn't hear what I said. I'm still not sure about it...

"Sorry this all happened."



[*The Next Day*

9:37, *Philippine Time*]

Martial is still in his deep sleep when I woke up. I left him with a thick blanket on him and headed to the kitchen to cook us breakfast.

I'm actually not sure what will happen today. But, I worry Philip would scold me for what happened.

I prepared sunny side up eggs and a cup of rice on each plate. I made coffee for both of us. I heard from somewhere Filipinos do like coffee.

It's pretty late actually. I would've gone to my work 2 hours ago but... I cannot leave Martial here without knowing what to do.

I just placed the utensils on the plates when I heard a ***loud thud*** from the living room.

Oh, no. That could be from the guest room.

I hurriedly ran to the room to check up on him. When I left my kitchen, he got out of the room, already dressed (but he left his polo unbuttoned) and seemed in a hurry. He was looking around. Our sight suddenly met.

His eyes look shocked or scared... teary... ***mad***... or worried.

Then, he rushed outside. I quickly followed him. "**MARTIAL!**" I shouted but it didn't make him stop.

No, no, no. Please don't run away from me...

I saw my guards running after him when he attempted to climb up the gate.

"Guards! Please let him be!"

The one who heard my order told the others. They stopped chasing him.

I watched him jump down from the gate and run away from my property... without looking back.

...

...

Without looking back...

He looked scared.

He looked mad...

...

I gulped.

I felt heavy.

I felt like I was being choked.

I slowly... weakly... walked back to my door. I leaned by the frame and gripped the fabric on my chest.

I made a mistake, I realized.

I shouldn't have... ***done that.***

It's so wrong. ***Such a big mistake, China.***

I covered my mouth when my sight started to get blurry and my

knees went weak that would make me kneel down.

. . .

God... I'll never find anyone else like North Korea...

Chapter Ten

MARTIAL LAW

- - □□◦□□-□□◦□□ - -

[9:37, *Philippine Time*]

I felt so light. I felt like... sleeping on a cloud. *Am I sick?*

I buried myself in the thick, soft blanket wrapped around me and would want to sleep longer. I have never slept in a place this cold again.

I slowly open my eyes. My sight was kind of blurry, so I rubbed them to clear my vision. It's still dark.

I just closed my eyes back.

...

...

Oh, wait. I don't have this kind of blanket.

I forced myself to sit up and felt the sudden headache as if I was hit by something hard. I pressed my eyes when I got dizzy too. I felt like this room is turning around me.

I began wondering where I am. Who the fuck brought me here? What happened before I got here?

It took me some time to feel a little better. It was loud around me, as I remember. It was nighttime too.

I furrowed my eyebrows when I felt something... strange on me. My skin is directly in contact with this blanket. I lifted the fabric to see if- ***Oh my fucking God, I am naked-***

Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit.

Who did I sleep with?!

. . .

China?

G-G-G-Gross! I slept with him?!

I shook my head. *No, no, no. That's just my thought. That's just my thought.* I only thought of that because I remember being with China last night but **no**.

I put my foot down on the floor. It's heavy. It felt numb.

No, no. That thing didn't happen. No. I hit my head with my wrist just to remove all the dirty thoughts in it.

As I reach my clothes on the floor and *try* to wear them back on me despite my weakened legs, what happened last night are gradually coming back into my mind. Yes, I do remember I invited him to South Korea's bar to talk. We were in the crowd, partying with them.

That's all I can recall for now.

I can't remember being horny at that time for me to agree to have sex with anyone.

All I did is fun. But not *that*.

And what I knew, too, is that China didn't want to get drunk. That's why he stayed by the counter and watch over me instead. I trust him. *Why the heck will he do something as disgusting as that to me?*

I hissed. *Auh. My butt kinda hurt.* I ignored it.

To begin knowing where the hell I am, I searched around the room to find some clues.

I held on to anything I can hold onto while I look around. It's pretty dark here, I cannot see other colors. But the wall, I can say, is in the shade of red.

There's this cabinet nearby the bed. I waited for any noise from outside this room... but there's none. I pulled the drawer out. There were combs, clips, metallic necklaces, and other accessories in the first one. In the second drawer, there were bottles. Hairsprays, probably.

But there's this small one. In my curiosity, I picked it up from the drawer and read what the label said. Thanks to the sunlight from the window.

. . .

Amazing Herbs

Aphrodisiac Formula 44

Supports Sexual Vitality

. . .

Supports... what?

"N-No..." My hand began shaking. I began breathing heavily. My lungs felt tight. "Th-This can't be- No..."

The bottle fell from my hand. I stepped back away from it as I feel my surroundings swirling again and my legs became light.

I glanced back to see if there was anything I can hold onto. I got dizzy suddenly again. I was trying to reach the other table, but my hand missed it, so I fell down on the floor.

"**Argh! Fuck!**" I exclaimed when my head hit the corner of the table. I pressed it while crying because of the pain.

I gripped my hair and groaned. I was bearing my teeth and sweating.

Why did I let that happen?

This... This isn't my body!

I recalled I was reminded not to be seen by anybody. Wherever I am right now, I have to run out.

I gotta pick myself up and run. I gotta pick myself up and run.

I pushed myself up by the table, walked fast to the door, and went out of the room quickly.

When I got out, I looked on the sides to know where to get out but... I caught China looking at me.

I had no time to analyze what his eyes are telling me. But the longer I stare, I feel the boiling of my blood. I can recall his words that he wants to be careful with us and I trusted him with all my heart that he wouldn't do anything bad.

He knew this body isn't mine. The fact that *he touched my brother* with his consciousness open angers me.

This is all his fault.

This is all his fault. He made me do that thing for him. He must've liked it. This must be all that he wanted to do to my brother.

I turned away from him and ran away as fast as I can to the large doors of this damn house. I didn't bother to wear anything on my feet. I ran away outside with my bare feet.

"MARTIAL!"

I didn't look back. I'm *scared* of him. I'm mad at him. I don't want to see him again. He ***ruined*** me.

The guards running after me didn't bother me. I reached the gate and saw it locked. I decided to climb up on it just to get out of this damn place.

I dropped myself on the ground and had a time to look back. I noticed the guards don't chase after me anymore, but I still continued running away as far as I can.

. . .

. . .

I was hoping I'd see a town after minutes of running, but I ended up in a forest. Tall trees. Rocky road. Few grasses on the ground. *Where did he bring me? What did he want to do with me?*

Where's the way home?

What if I got lost?

How am I going to explain Phil about what happened?

I-I don't remember a thing...

I ran my fingers through my hair as I look around to decide which way will I go. There's nobody around me.

When I got exhausted and heavy, I went towards a tree, sat down and leaned on it. My knees still felt weak and now, are in pain because I forced myself to run quick and ignored its weakening. I am so worried that I sobbed as I kept thinking how to get out of here.

I curled myself and hugged my knees. "Ph-Phil... I-I'm sorry. I'm sorry..." I murmured at myself as I pull my hair and cry harder.

'Martial?'

"Phil! G-God, I'm- I'm sorry!" I shouted in the middle of my crying.

'W-What happened?! Are you crying?! What happened to you?!'

"I-I don't know!"

'What do you mean you don't know?! Where are you now? Where have you been?!'

I was sobbing as wiping my tears as I try to answer him. "I-I don't know. Bu-But I am su-ure China bo-brought me here..." Then, I continued crying again.

'Shit. China. '

As Phil became silent, I forced myself to stop crying but I kept on sobbing as I wipe my tears with my shirt.

God, I feel like a baby. I never cried this much in a while.

'Do you have your phone, Martial?'

"No- No... I didn't bring a-any be-because I might lost- i-it..."

'The keypad one. I told you to always keep it with you.'

. . .

I touched my pockets and froze when I felt something in one of them. I quickly pulled the small keypad phone from it. I smiled at it and had tears of joy.

'Did you have it?'

"Ph-Phil... I- I forgot I have this-"

'Shh... Shh... don't cry. Just call Tawi-Tawi to pick us up wherever you are now.'

Before doing so, I stood up and brushed off the dirt from my pants and shirt. Phil sounds really serious right now. He must've been feeling disappointed at me after hearing me like this.

In fact, I haven't cried hard this much ever since that day I knew I am Phil's brother and I am a part of the family. I cannot think what heavy that actually made me cry. It's *shame*, I guess. Self-hatred. And such.

Inspite of having blurry sight, I managed to dial Tawi-Tawi.

God. I wouldn't know what I'll do without Philip.



[A|N: When the dialogue's written like 'this' , it's Philip's lines

outside his mind. This is in Martial Law's POV but in his brother's mind.]

*[By the afternoon,
In Philip's mind]*

I am in the void again, leaning against an invisible wall, sitting on a total-black floor and looking down at my feet. I am currently hugging my legs and laying my chin on my knees.

This is where I'm in when Philip has the control over his body. It's so lonely here, but since I did shit things outside his mind, staying here is my preferable punishment than getting hit by my father's bamboo stick.

I still cried when I got here. I am just resting because I got tired blaming myself for whatever Phil's feeling right now in his body. Minutes ago, he's complaining about the pain in his buttohole.

Mhm-mm. Yes. I told him China forced me to do such thing.

His first reaction was, "*Putragis ka. 'Tang ina, nagawa niya 'yon?!'*" [*(Filipino curse words)* He actually did that?!]

The second one was, "*I'll talk to him about this.*"

Then, we both started worrying about what might our homophobic *papa* do to us if he finds out. He won't do anything if no one will tell him about that. So, for now, we're safe. That made me less worry.

Philip made a request to see China in his office for a *confidential* matter. We immediately got a reply that he said yes to it.

I waited here in the darkness. If Philip made his own plan to fix the situation, I have mine.

Call me a disaster. I'm good with it. It's actually a part of my name and personality.

If I heard Phil finally had a meeting with China alone, I'll pull him out of the consciousness and kick China's ass as hard as he deserves.

I'll knock him down to the ground and finally shoot him to death if I can!

I didn't tell my brother about that. We know he won't let me have a chance in the light.

I just arrived in front of his building.'

"Oh, great!" I stood and gathered all myself for an attack. I don't have the mental breakdown anymore! I am ready to avenge my brother's body. Such an ugly pig. "Will you let me hear what you're saying Phil?" I asked him kindly.

'No. I might trigger you and make an opening for you to take over.'

I crossed my arms. "I can't believe you became smarter, hm?" He actually defeated me there. "I just want to hear if he'll touch you again."

'Fine. But please, promise me you won't do anything bad this time.'

"I promise!"

I know Philip. I know he doubts me now.

After another deep breath, I waited for his voice talking to the man. He was silent for minutes. I guess he took a lot of floors or stairs before he finally reach China's office.

. . .

I patiently waited as I have myself ready.

. . .

. . .

'Good evening, Sir China.'

I felt myself turned on. I felt excited when I heard my brother say his name.

Unfortunately, I cannot hear what China is saying, but I can surely

predict the whole story by just listening to Phil. Good luck to me, really.

'This is about the news I heard from my brother. You probably know what it is about.'

If I were Philip, I'll quickly tell China that he fucked my brother. Phil does love formalities. He's addicted to them.

'Let's get straight...'

Finally.

'...did you really touch him?'

That's still very indirect. Why can't he say the word **fuck** as if he never said it before?

'I don't want any other details. Just answer me yes or no.'

. . .

He sounded mad.

'I don't want- No! My brother won't beg you! He's a responsible man! He wouldn't do sex with you if you didn't tempt him!'

Now, he's getting more mad.

'I'm tired of all the "act of kindness" you're doing! Stop faking yourself! Just tell me if you did or did not!'

China won't say it, then.

'Liar.'

I, then, ran to where the consciousness is. I grabbed all the black matter away the *light* so I could take over. The viscousless ooze were crawling back to the consciousness. Meaning, Philip is fighting me back.

I continued pulling him away from it and when a hole appears, I quickly went in there until my body gained the control over Phil.

I can now clearly see China. I held his hand and pulled him upwards to flip him down to the floor. I'm not sure if he started crying, but I felt now mercy on him. I don't pity him. "If you want me to make you admit what you did in the bad way, then let's do it in the bad way," I said in monotone as I pull out the gun kept on my back.

I reloaded it and pointed it at him. He quickly covered his face... and spoke between his sobs. "***I-I-I-I'm so-sorry! I-I know I could've resisted myself! I-I'm sorry- I- Just kill me!***"

. . .

I suddenly went silent. My hand lost its grip on the gun.

. . .

He could've fought me back.

He... shouldn't be crying. He's an insensitive person who wants to take everything.

Why... did he tell me to kill him? He could've fought me back.

*Alters can
fall in love...*

☐☐ ➤ Chapter Eleven

[*Minutes Later...*]

"Can you stop crying? It's irritating me."

China sniffed. "S-Sorry."

I wasted five minutes on the couch across the one where China was sitting while watching him sob and cry. I kept myself silent, feeling really annoyed and thinking if I'm gonna regret sparing his life for the second time.

"Tell me what really happened last night." I went really serious and focused because I had to interpret the words that will come out from his mouth. It is so unbelievable that I and my brother are wrong about our suspicions.

Number 1, he isn't making an eye contact with me. He kept looking away.

"Y-Yo-You... You were i-in a- crowd..."

Number 2, the stuttering.

"I-I left you in the crowd! Then, wh-when I saw you drinking so bad, I tried to stop you."

Number 3, his statement contradicts the other. He left me in the crowd, which means he care less. And now, he said he was trying to stop me, which now means he care

"I-I decided to bring you home b-be-because I hate my apartment."

PFFTT!! Sorry. I tried to stop my inner self from laughing. I mean,

dude. Why would he hate his own apartment? Does it stink there?

I interrupted, "And you slept with me on a bed?"

"N-NO! NO!"

Number 4, defensive tone of voice.

I stood up from my seat and put my hands in my pockets. "Y'know, what I got from you are your submissive noises like your sobs, cries and stuttering. I'm giving up knowing from you about what really happened because you're just lying-"

"WAIT! S-Sir Martial- Law, wait!" China hurriedly came close to me, knelt on my front and held my GORGEOUS hand. He continued crying more. He made me stop walking to the exit. "I-I'm sorry for what I-I've done! I could've stopped myself!"

"And why didn't you?"

He paused while looking away. "You..."

"I, what?"

"... Y-You're the one who asked me."

...

I'm kinda believing that. I even felt just a bit surprised about it. Not gonna lie, I think I can actually do that if I got out of my character because of the situation in the bar. "Tell me more."

China wiped his tears. "You became heavily drunk last night. When we arrived at my house and got you in a room, I would've gone away but you stopped me and told me you need help because you're feeling hot. I even turned on the aircon from you. When you started asking me, I refused for like a million times b-but-"

"Did you use that thing with an aphrodisiac formula in it to me?"

"N-No! O-Of course, I didn't! I-I was thinking maybe the one who made you take aphrodisiac are the girls you hung out with back in

the bar."

"Hmmm... Why do you have such thing in your drawer?"

"I used to use it with North Korea."

THIS is what made me surprised. He sounds so honest this time.

"Does it taste good?"

"Well, if you take it directly, it tastes sweet. But if you mix it with any beverages, you won't notice the taste."

Hmmmm. He could be telling the truth all this time.

"Who's the bottom between you two?"

"Him. He likes being cho-"

"Okay! Okay! Enough! That's... too much honesty!" I stopped him even before he finished his word.

"D-Do- Do you believe me..?"

I heavily sighed. "Well, I can recall a few details. I don't want to be reminded of what I did."

"I- It's fi-"

"Since I'm a part of this mistake, then I gotta stop getting mad at you."

"Thank you."

I looked away to think. This will be another explanation I'll do to Phil if I make my own decisions again. He will probably make me spit out valid reasons about why I should give China another chance.

Bah! Whatever! Random bullshit, go!

"I forgive you this time."

"OH, THANK Y-"

"BUT! Next time, help me control myself because I know you already know I shouldn't be in public places, right?"

"Yes. Yes, I do know and I will do it."

"Good-"

"I won't waste this second chance again. I feel grateful to be given by this, though I don't deserve it." He bent down and put his forehead and hands on the ground. "May I ask to reach my apologies to your brother? I am genuinely sorry. I promise again I'd be careful around you."

. . .

"M'kay. I will. Thank you also... for being honest. You still have my trust."



MANILA PHILIPPINES



[*The Next Day, Noon*]

This... is all Martial's fault. Now, my fishermen are in danger again.

First of all, I couldn't believe he'll still forgive that close-eyed big ass country after everything that happened between MY BODY and him. What I can tell you about it is that my own brother didn't even consider me! Why? Is it because when there's something happening in my country, he won't be blamed for it anyway?

Just around 10 in the morning, I received a call from Palawan and said their fishermen disappeared in the sea when they tried to fish a little far from Spratly Islands but they made sure they didn't go outside the area of responsibility. The last word Palawan received from them is that there were Chinese people there...

So, you know who to blame.

I immediately took my telephone and dialed China to inform him about this because he also has to take action. This is his (and my brother's) fault.

"Ni Hao! This is Chi-"

"So, you literally don't know what's going on right now, do you?" I started a serious conversation with it. I'm tired of introductions. That will only make me go too far.

"W-What's going on?"

I would put my palm on my face. "Well, you're people are back murdering my people. Aren't you going to take a solution to it?"

. . .

He suddenly went silent.

"Uhh, hello?"

. . .

"Is it in Palawan?"

"Yes. Near the Spra-"

"I gotta go."

"Woah, wait-!"

China hung up quickly.

Man, he sounded dead serious. I must go there too before he does. We don't know what he can do.

I hurriedly took my suit hanging on my chair and rushed outside. While walking up to the rooftop, my guards started to follow me. I ordered them to prepare a helicopter for me and we're going to MIMAROPA.

Don't make this day even worse, China.



[About an hour later]

As soon as my helicopter landed near Palawan's port, I jumped from it and ran to the crowd. I excused myself so they'd give me a way to the scene.

I'm literally panicking right now because what if all my guesses about China's plan are true. That he's just making my brother fall to his words so we'll be close but he'll keep on threatening this land.

When I got out of the crowd, I saw Palawan and other respondents carrying the victims. They're sweating and panting. And I see no wounds on them... or even bruises.

I approached them close. I gently patted my hand on a fisherman's shoulder. "Hey. Good day, sir. Where are you from? What happened there?"

"W-We..." He started answering me while panting, "We were caught by the Chinese. They tied our boat close to theirs and tried to take the buckets of fish we just caught..."

I glanced at the boat that I thought they rode on. The pales and buckets of fish are still in there. *I-I'm confused.*

The man continued, "Then... their president came with their bigger boat."

China...

"I-I don't understand what they're talking about but... the Chinese let us go."

Eh?

"Then, I saw their president load a gun and shot at the fishermen who caught us."

I froze. I became speechless.

Palawan interfered, "Are you not lying? Are you sure that's what really happened?"

"Yes! Yes! W-We saw it with our naked eyes! I-It happened in front of us!"

"Impossible," I murmured to myself.

I quickly walked away from the scene and let Palawan take the men to the health center. I dialed China again with my phone. I doubt that story. He can't do it. That's very unusual of him.

"Phil-"

"What the heck did you do?"

"What I have to do."

"Can you like... give a detailed answer? I don't want to waste time understanding your words."

"... Are you sure you need the details? You can just ask your men about what I did."

So... *It's true.* I thought. "I want to hear the story from you."

"I came there to get rid of the problem as fast as I can."

"By killing them?!"

"Yes."

I covered my mouth and my eyes widened in surprise.

"What I did is a part of my agreement with Sir Martial Law. If someone ruins the peace between us, we'll have them

*resting in peace. Plus, I already
told my nation to be careful
around Filipinos but since they
didn't listen to me, they deserve
a punishment... directly from me."*

...

...

Am... Am I dreaming?

*"I want to thank you for
informing me. I'm sorry I wasn't
updated about it earlier."*

I'm running out of words. I- I went blank. I don't know what else to do but to deeply sigh, brush my hair and think about how true this is.

Martial Law, what did you do to China? "I, uhm... thank you too... for taking action." I turned down the call immediately as I said it. I don't wanna hear more. Every word I hear from him is creeping me out. He's changing into someone I don't know and I don't even expect.

Calm down, Philip. This can be a part of China's plan to take you down...

Or can't be?

*Alters can
fall in love...*

♡□□□□♡

A|N

*Sorry for the 1 month inactivity. I was getting rid of a lot of problems.
But don't worry. I thought of fun ideas for the next chapters~*

*What you'll get from the next parts are two chapters for North Korea,
Phil getting mad at Martial, then the TRUTH about Marcos, the dead
twin of Phil.*

Nyehehehehe.

Chapter Twelve

MARTIAL LAW

- - □□◦□□--□□◦□□ - -

[By afternoon, At sunset]

Before the day ends, I want to feel relaxed. I felt tired and stressed lately while training the students from our military school. There's one and the only place I could go to chill, that one large... mountain-like rock near the sea of Palawan.

Yeah. After that issue with the fishermen here, I hurriedly went back to Malacañang to change clothes just to go to the military school. Then, Philip decided to stay here in Palawan for the rest of the day until tomorrow noon to watch over the place. This gave me a chance to have time alone in my relaxing spot.

I walked the stairs of rocks to the summit of this... mini-mountain of rocks (*how the fuck can I know what these people call it?*). I sat down and started to admire the view of the sunset.

...

Breathe in. Breathe out.

Now, it's just me and myself. Philip's probably resting in his mind space, so I guess he won't listen to my thoughts.

There's something that's been bothering me the whole day. Philip is blaming me if China did something good. Is it a bad thing? Well, China hasn't done anything bad yet, so I think it's too early for me to be blamed.

...

I suddenly turned to my back when I heard footsteps coming near.
Someone's going up here.

I stood up, pulled out my gun, and reloaded it. I waited for a moment to see who that person could be. It can be just residents of the place.

No.

It's already been years since the first day I went here. No one ever comes up here!

Seconds later...

I was shocked to see *this* person arrive here. He also stopped walking when he saw me.

"Martial-"

"Wait, hold on, China. What are you doing here?"

He looked behind him.

"Were you following me?!" I asked a quick question next.

"N-No! Why would I do that?! I come here every day!"

I examined him. China seemed harmless. No gun is with him. He is holding a jar and some sticks and there's a sling bag on him. I wonder what he'll do here.

"How do you find this place?"

"I was looking for a peaceful place. When I entered this province, I took a walk around and saw these mountains. So, then I started coming here."

"What exactly do you do up here?"

"*Qigong*."

I bunched my eyebrows in confusion. "King kong?"

"No. It's like a... meditation thing."

Oh, I see.

China bowed first before continuing to walk to where I stand. I watched him prepare his things. He placed the jar on the ground and got his bottle from his bag. He poured water into the jar and dropped some oil-looking liquid in it too. Then, China lit the tip of the sticks and placed them in the jar. He did an Indian sit and closed his eyes.

I decided to sit a bit near him and observe.

...

I tilted my head to the side to see his face more. Then, I talked to myself in my mind.

Aww. Poor lil man. Why is he such a botto-

Oh, dear God- MARTIAL! STOP THINKING!

...

HAHA. Stop thinking, how?

Hmm... I wonder what I can do with this harmless country.

Then, I suddenly had flashbacks of the night we once had.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAGHH!! GROSS, MARTIAL. WHAT THE HECK WERE YOU THINKING?! Philip will literally kill you when he heard your thoughts, you know that, Martial.

Are you gay?

Why are you gay?

I looked away with my heating face due to my own embarrassment. I. Am. Not. Gay. I swear. I never felt attracted to someone of the same gender as I.

...

But what if I do now?

*Oh no, no, no, no. I'm not ready yet for papa's bamboo stick. AND NO!
I've never been interested in men- *insert vomiting sound effect*
Doesn't it sound gross-*

"Are you okay?"

I went suddenly blank when I heard him talk. I faced him again and saw his eyes remain close.

"Yeah." I quickly answered.

"Believe me or not, I felt a rush of energies around me while I did this. Kinda distracted me from praying to my ancestors."

"And... where do you think that came from?"

"Hmm. From you."

I forced myself to laugh my nervousness out. "No way! I wasn't doing anything! What are you saying?! A sorcerer? A fortune teller?"

"The Eastern Asian countries were known with this kind of ability to feel energies, the light, and the dark ones."

"Then, if those were from me, what are they? Dark energies?!"

"Nope. I can't tell yet... but they're tickling me."

"Ha! You've got to be kidding me!"

I was just about to stand up when China suddenly held my arm. Because I wasn't expecting it, my heart skipped a beat. A slight wind came next and blew on my face. China seemed to inhale it.

I felt...

A bit lighter?

What in the world is going on?!

I pulled out my arm from his hold and moved away quickly. "WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME?!"

"I released the caged energies from you. Felt the breeze? Those were from your soul. You gave it out."

"You're damn weird, China. Not gonna lie."

I just had a moment to look at his eyes. His look to me... felt sharp. I remembered he was called a dictator. Now, I can see that side of him just from his eyes. They're... melting me. *Fucking... hot-*

"Anyways, m-moving on." I started a new conversation, so we won't go far.

China just hummed. He also began gathering up his things.

"Since when have you been going here?" I asked.

"I wrote a date on the ground." He leaned forward also a foot away from the cliff and wiped the dust. I went close to it too to see the writings. "Summer, date 19, 2012," he said.

"Is that a date in your Chinese calendar?"

"Hmm? **OH!** Yeah. We use different calendars, yes. Sorry. Let me compute this for a moment."

"No wonder why it sounded different from our date." I waited for him to finish then.

In fact, I also remembered the first day I got here. *Seventh day of August, 2010.*

After a minute, China gave me the conversion of the date... and it almost made me jump. "I got it. **August 7, 2012.**"

...

"Are you fucking serious, China?"

His smile faded when he heard my sudden seriousness. "Y-Yes-"

"You've probably stalked me."

"W-Why?! I-I don't understand-"

"I came to this place first, August 7, 2010. Almost the same date you just said."

"H-How was that a result of stalking? I didn't even know you're coming here too!"

"You must be doing some mind tricks. You're mind reading me! Weirdo!"

"That's too much. You're exaggerating what I told you. I did nothing wrong and only showed you what I was saying."

. . .

China went like " :((" to me.

"Sorry, M-Martial." He bowed his head.

"Weren't you calling me Sir Martial Law?"

His eyes widened. "B-But we're friends now, aren't we? I thought it'd be okay for you to be called that way."

I looked up to the skies to make a decision. *Since when did we become friends? Since the bar scene? Or just now?* I shrugged and looked back at him again. "I'll allow you to call me Martial."

"YEAY-"

"BUT!"

"Aww."

"Don't call me anything else. Just Martial."

He went silent for a moment. "How about *Sir Maria*-"

I wavered my hand. "No! Nope. Forget that. I feel better when I'm called without the *'sir'*."

We smiled and chuckled at each other before looking away from each other.

I just noticed we talked a lot already. I hate to admit this but... I felt more relieved when I have someone to talk to in this place where I used to relax.

We both listened to the silence for now. It's getting darker too. I should be going home by now. But some *feeling's* been wanting me to stay.

Fine. Okay. Yes. I kinda like this moment. But it's not because it looks romantic. It's because I am with someone who's a weird, lonely, fun, talkative person... which is China.

I thought of a question to stop our silence. "Hey. Aren't you supposed to do the meditation thingy in your temples? Like... how you, people, do it?"

China hugged his legs. "Yeah. But I think I can pray wherever I want. And I feel more relaxed here." He turned to me. "You know, I felt a lot of *dejá vu* here. Things that gave me a certain feeling that something has already happened."

"I felt one before... but in the office when I was talking to you about the friendship thing."

"Ah, yes. Me too. It's weird, isn't it? We haven't met before but... we felt we already did."

"Well, you must've done the same thing to someone before, not me. It can be the case."

"Hm." China suddenly widened his eyes and smiled like he thought of something. "You're an alter, right? And you are a different person, yes?"

I nodded.

"Can I hear some of the stories about your life before you got inside Philip?"

. . .

"It must be interesting to know. Hehe."

. . .

"O-Oh no- S-Sorry if the question bothered you! Oh no, sorry."

. . .

"Sorry I wasn't careful again. Martial, sorry."

. . .

It wasn't a bother for me actually. The question is fine. I'll be happy to tell my story... if only I can remember. Years have already passed, I still couldn't recall what happened to me in my, what so called, past life.

I gave a slight smile at China. "I... can't tell you anything. I don't remember the life I had." Then, I chuckled. "I didn't even have time to think about it."

"Oh."

"But..." I paused from talking to stand up and brush off dust from my pants, "Now that you mentioned it, I'm going to start overthinking about it."

He stood up from the ground too, carrying his things. "I didn't mean to make you overthink. That's bad."

"Nah, it's better to get to know myself. My past is a part of me."

"Are you heading home, Martial?"

"Yeah. I stayed here for too long already. Phil's body might get sick."

When I just took a step, China suddenly shouted at the ground that

made me step back. "MARTIAL, A FROG!"

"AH!"

I took steps backward, not knowing the cliff was near me. My heart stopped. My mind went blank. I was shocked.

. . .

"MARTIAL!"

I am fortunate because before I even fall, China ran towards me to reach my hand.

Time stopped... for a moment... and words came across my mind.

The words from Martial's past

" XĪNGĀN! XĪNGĀN! XĪNGĀN! "

He then pulled me back, away from the cliff. I breathe heavily while looking at it. I almost died.

I think I suddenly had a flashback. But, I didn't recall faces. Just the words. And the voice. A foreign word. Repeated thrice.

What is this? Another déjà vu? But, in this place?

"M-Martial. Hey. Are you okay? Sorry I surprised you."

I just stared at him. But I cannot trace the face of who shouted. It could be him. It couldn't be him. *Sinigang*? I didn't hear the word clearly.

"D-Don't scare me, please. I am really sorry."

. . .

My sight became blurry. My lips shiver.

"China. That... felt like it happened before."

♡□□□□♡

A|N

*hehe~ look what I just did~ The mysterious past of Martial Law is
starting to be revealed~*

Chapter Thirteen

WARNING

Sensitive words.

Rants.

* * *

PYONGYANG NORTH KOREA

- - □□○□□—□□○□□ - -

"That... felt like it happened before."

I think it's been hour already since I came here after following *yeobo*. I just wanted to know what makes him busy for him to ignore my messages and calls.

What I got so far is that this Martial is Philippines' alter. How? Like that personality disorder? I thought it isn't true. Both of them have been going here but haven't met each other. How ridiculous.

And they're both feeling déjà vu here. Are they both imagining? Creating illusions?

I continued listening to them from the bush.

"I better go home."

"Want me to give you a ride?"

"Ah, no. Thanks."

Yeah, bitch. You better not sit on my seat. I thought.

"Are you going to Malacañang? Or..."

"Nope. Philip said he'll stay here in Palawan 'til tomorrow. The

house we rented is just near here."

"I see."

Why the fuck will a president rent a damn house if they can have it free?

"When will we meet again here?"

"Uhhh, I can't tell yet. But I hope I'll meet you again."

I silently pretended to vomit. I felt disgusted.

"Alright! I gotta go now! I'll see you next time!"

"Yes! I promise!"

Then, I sat back to the inner part of the bush when I heard them step closer to my position. I covered my mouth to avoid making noises.

I heard a minute of silence. Then, multiple footsteps going far. I waited for few seconds to confirm there's no one around anymore.

I peaked my head out from the bushes.

I jumped out of it and put my hands on my waist. I exhaled deeply. "I am way better than him."

"Korea."

"AAH!" My soul almost left my body! I even jumped on my position in surprise! I turned back to see China seriously looking **straight at me**. I quickly fixed my posture and my outfit. I made myself look unbothered by the sudden event. "Good evening. I expected you to stay here." I lied.

"Why are you here?"

Why is he serious? It's like he never had his clingy side in him, huh?

"Checking you."

"Why?"

I shrugged. "I wanna know what's making you busy."

Not gonna lie. His monotone voice made me feel more nervous and defenseless. But, I tried to raise my pride. I hate feeling defeated.

I continued, "You're ignoring my messages and calls. I wanna know what's making you busy."

"I turned your last call down. Didn't that mean I don't wanna talk to you anymore? Didn't you understand that?"

"I cannot let you go without explanations why, China. Is that because of *him*?! Since you met him, you've been acting weird!"

"That is because I had **ENOUGH** of your rules and I found **someone else** where I can be comfortable!"

. . .

I smiled sarcastically away from him after hearing that. *He wasn't comfortable with me but he was kissing me on the bed.* "I don't understand how you became uncomfortable with me after **being with me for 2 decades** since the fall of the USSR."

China looked away.

I deeply breathed and crossed my arms. "How dare you push me away that quick?" It's almost a whisper and I said it while looking straight at his eyes. "I hate feeling hurt, China. You, who I gave **all my love to**, made me **feel** it! You said you love me! You said you need me! I gave everything- **ALL OF ME** to you! **WHAT ELSE DID I MISS?! WHAT DID YOU SEE ON THAT 'MARTIAL LAW' THAT YOU DIDN'T SEE ON ME?!**"

"You're acting like **dad!**"

. . .

"You're... setting boundaries in my life! You're always **near** me!"

"AND WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT, CHINA?! I WAS TOLD TO LOOK AFTER YOU!"

"The USSR is gone! You could've stopped doing that on me! I can take care of myself! You're reminding me of dad, the person I hate to remember!"

"Ah, so, *you hate me?*!"

"YES! BECAUSE WHY CAN'T YOU JUST GIVE ME SPACE?!"

"Isn't **A DAY** enough space?! Does that mean you need **A WHOLE YEAR?**! Don't you understand that **I'M WORRIED FOR YOU?**! AM I WRONG ABOUT THAT?!"

"You pressure me!"

"WHAT'S SO WRONG ABOUT MAKING YOU DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO?!"

"SHOULDN'T I BREAK UP WITH YOU?! SHOULDN'T I HAVE TO REST?! CAN'T I FIND SOMEONE ELSE?! **YOU'RE SELFISH, KOREA!** YOU WANTED ME ALL BY YOUR OWN!"

. . . "No, I don't. I'm taking care of y-"

"You don't, North Korea. You're **DICTATING** me what to do. You're **SPYING ON ME!** YOU CAN'T LET ME GO!"

. . . *I'm wrong then?*

"All my life I never wanted to be reminded by my father who literally tried to ruin my dreams! And **YOU'RE HERE** who did **NOTHING ELSE IN MY APARTMENT** but to **KISS ME** and **MADE ME THINK I LOVE YOU.** YOU MADE ME **LUSTED** ON YOU. YOU'RE LIKE A **SNAKE**, KOREA."

. . . *I'm like a what...*

"I can't bare faking myself anymore! I told you, I never loved y-"

"That- That's enough- Y-Y-You said- t-too much."

I uncontrollably cried. I couldn't hold back my tears. Embarrassing. Dramatic asshole.

I looked away while getting mad at myself for being emotional. *What's wrong with me? Someone just became honest to me. Why... am I hurt? I accepted everything he said. They're all true. Then, why am I crying?*

I look pathetic now. Weak. Useless.

"Thank you for being so honest to me." I managed to look back at him with my blurry sight and a tear sliding on my cheek. My shivering lips spoke, "I was waiting for you t-to tell me that. N-Now, I don't have anything to worry about. Tha- Thank you-"

My throat fucking hurts. *This feels heavy. I feel pathetic.*

"Korea, I'm sorry."

"You have nothing to be sorry about. You did no wrong."

"I just... hurt you-"

"No, you did not." I forced myself to laugh while I was sobbing. "You're just honest." I sniffed. "I-I think I should go. I'll- I guess I shouldn't see you again."

Thank you for the days and nights you were with me.

Thank you... for making me feel loved.

Thank you for showing me that the world is safe.... and can become this bad.

I turned my back away from him and kept the last words I thought of in me. I don't wanna look at him anymore. He scares me.

The world's too dangerous. I shouldn't let my guards down. I'm not going outside my country again. I'm not talking to anyone outside my zone again.

I never faced back. I don't want to see how horrible I did back there.

I hope you'll be happier with him then.

Slightly homophobic thoughts
Slight drama

* * *

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Without even saying any words, Kuya Del just pulled me by my hand out of the gate with him. I didn't even see him take his wallet!

He opened the car door for me. "Get in."

I bunched my eyebrows. "Wait. Why am I sitting beside the driver's seat?! I want to drive!" I debated.

"I'm the older brother. I drive!"

I sighed. I'm feeling lazy anyway to drive, so I just took a seat beside the driver's seat.

Kuya Del sat on his seat and quickly started the car. I crossed my arms and pouted. "I should drive. I defeated you in our arnis match!"

"You drive fast. I don't want you to give us violations again."

"It's at normal speed!"

"YOU LITERALLY DROVE OVER 150 KILOMETERS PER HOUR THE LAST TIME I ALLOWED YOU TO DRIVE!"

"IT'S NOT THAT FAST!"

"YOU'RE OVERTAKING ALMOST EVERY CAR IN OUR WAY!"

"THEY'RE SLOW!"

"AND YOU'RE FAST!"

I leaned back on my seat with my arms still crossed. "M'kay."

"Now, I defeated you." I felt him slightly punch my arm. I ignored him to show him I'm not playing games.

A few seconds later of being silent, I think he noticed I'm mad. He started forcing me to talk. "Hey. Hey, are you mad? Dude, I didn't know you got offended too. Ohhh, you feel bad you're defeated."

"No."

He chuckled. "*Ang cute mo 'pag galit ka.*" ["*You look cute when you're mad.*"]

I quickly glared at Kuya Del when I heard him. I had words to say about it but I couldn't say them! "S-S-Sto-top-"

"You're not used to compliments, I see."

I faced him away. He's starting to give me "*cute*" compliments again.

"When you're finally in a relationship, you'd get that a lot."

I started to become annoyed. I ignored him again.

It's not that I hate Kuya Del. He's thoughtful, caring and considerate. There are just times that he becomes too clingy or... too cheesy. Too close. Always saying that "relationship" thingy. I always feel like he's trying to make me feel what he felt since he got into a gay relationship. I'd rather be stone-hearted than to be softened by someone like Kuya Del.

Oh, I-I didn't mean to disrespect him. I still love Kuya Del. But I'm just avoiding being influenced by him to become "*one of them*".

To be honest, I do sometimes feel disgusted when I see him being gay in person. I tend to look away from him and not see him as my brother anymore. I didn't feel his "family love". It's always "gay love" or something. I feel uncomfortable with him. I just can't tell that.

He's a bit sensitive.

"Sorry." I heard him say.

When I look back at him, he's facing the front while he drives. I noticed the sudden change of emotion on his face.

I got nothing prepared to tell him so I continued being silent.

"How are you and Philip?"

I thought he'll ask about me and China. I cleared my throat. "We're good. Trying to accomplish a lot of things."

"Hmm."

"Philip became busier these days. He decided to come home to make his body relaxed so, basically I'm not allowed to do anything tiring."

"I see. I missed you both. Not gonna lie."

Really? "Why? How were you?"

"I had fun but I couldn't stop thinking about *home*. I went to my boyfriend— I mean, buddy's family house and introduced me to his siblings. I felt happier to see his siblings than his parents."

Yes, I told him to call his boyfriend his buddy whenever he talks to me about him.

"What did they say about you two?" I asked another question.

"They were okay with us. But I told them I can't introduce them to *papa* since... I'm not accepted yet. Then, they doubted me. I told them I'll do better."

"That made me feel your life's in danger."

"Yeah. I hate rejection. Makes me feel super bad. Oh! By the way, here we are."

I looked out of the window and saw the Jollibee entrance. Kuya Del turned down the engine and he got out of the car first. I opened my door and went out too.

We just got into an interesting topic to discuss and we have to pause it to order meals. What a cliffhanger.

"Wait, kuya. Who's paying the order, by the way?"

"Me."

"B-But you don't have your wallet with you!"

"Hmm. Did I?" He began touching his pockets as if he's looking for it.

"I didn't bring any money with me! I'm not paying anything!"

"Who said you're paying for the food?" Then, he pulled his leather wallet out of his pocket.

I breathed out in relief. He almost got me there.

"I'm the brother here. I pay everything for my lil brothers." Kuya Del messed my hair and walked past me.



I left Kuya Del on the line after telling him my order.

Let me tell you slightly about everything I was thinking about Kuya Del.

I don't actually like calling him that way. I've been calling him Del, Del Pilar, Goyo and Gregorio. Then, he told me, since we're **brothers**, I should call him *kuya* too like how Philip calls him. It's a bit weird for me since I didn't grow up with him.

Next, I do believe he's family-oriented. But, considering he has a boyfriend, he would've gone bonding with him. He shouldn't have spent more time with us. He's grown up. It's off or... good for me to see him like this. I do appreciate what he's doing for us but, I also want to see him all by himself.

Maybe, I just had a lot of expectations of him. Mostly the older siblings that I'm seeing are independent and live alone in their own houses. But Kuya Del is still happier with us. I haven't heard him say *"I felt so much fun with my boyfriend"*. No.

Why do things that I think should be happening aren't actually happening? D'ya get me? No? It's okay.

When I saw him approaching my table, I sat properly and muted my thoughts. I saw his smiling face again as he sat down on the chair in front of me. "How about you and China? How are you?" He suddenly gave me a quick question.

I thought of an answer that's not suspicious for him. "We're good."

"Hmm. How good?"

"Very good."

"Phil was telling me in the previous days he's letting you talk to him about the friendship thingy. I noticed it's working good."

"What did the other people say about that?"

"Hmm, they felt thankful the nations can be at peace. Some that I overhear said that they're worried we're taken advantage by China. You seem concerned too much about that matter. What to talk about something else?"

"Like?"

"Feelings, I guess? You're sometimes going too logical unlike Phil."

I scratched my nape. *I never wanted to talk about feelings because they're unnecessary for my life. I didn't even bother getting a girlfriend.*
"I do get mad a lot. I almost kill China, to be honest."

"HA! Then, the quote that I said during our match is true! **Make your weaknesses your strength** because they're a **part of you** too!"

I tilted my head as I think of how that is connected to what I just said. "Where's the connection there?"

"You overpowered a country because you felt extreme emotions."

Hmm. I do see my emotions as weaknesses. I feel so weak and useless whenever I cry. I see his point.

Kuya Del continued, "Don't be shy to express your emotions! You might be able to control people with it!"

"And... you expressed too much emotions today. You seem happy with me. Why?"

...

We both went in silence after that. He looked away from me. "Y-

You're my brother! Of course, I'm happy to be with you." He smiled... and it was forced, I see.

"I didn't see you spending some time with your boyfriend. You didn't even call him today."

And Kuya Del's the type of person that never talks about his side much. He quickly changes the topic everytime I try to make him open up about himself.

"Are you okay?" I asked him with my truest concern. I watched him look away.

After moments of silence, he began to talk. "We were-"

"Here are your orders, sir!" The waiter interrupted us. I let myself be entertained. I told the waiter to just place down the food on our table.

I was glancing at Kuya Del and he seems avoiding having eye contact with me.

When the waiter's finally gone, I waited for kuya to continue what he was saying.

Instead, I got this. "THANK YOU FOR THE FOOD!" Then, he picked up his spoon and fork.

I placed my hand over his to stop him. "We're not eating unless you tell me how you are!"

"I told you I'm good!"

"Did you two break up?!"

". . ."

"Just tell me how you are. It's not that hard, Kuya Del!"

Kuya Del dropped the utensils down and leaned angrily on his seat. He looked annoyed. "Papa was right all along. Okay? I was trying to prove him same sex relationship would last long! I failed!"

Oh, so they broke up. Sorry.

I let him continue. "Yesterday, I spent my whole day overthinking. I should've died years ago, if you'll think about it."

"Woah, woah! Why did you think that way?!"

"I'm scared to live longer! I witnessed how judgemental the world has become! Even though I tell myself these *feelings* I have will be my strength but I'm realizing it's getting me lost! Hukbalahap died because no one remembers her anymore. I wish people will just forget about me so I could die too!"

"No, no, no! No one's dying!"

"I would kill myself if only I didn't dedicate my life to you and Philip. I swore to myself I'd live for you two."

No... way...

"I want to be the person to ask you both about your days. I want to support you both until I can't. Because no one anymore in my life would ask me how I am. *Mama's* gone. Who else would be there for me? Our homophobic father?!" Kuya Del covered his face. "I'm living... while realizing I'm growing up as a disgrace. There's nothing special about me anymore. Who else there remembers me?!"

I bowed. "I do. And I'm sure Philip does too."

Next, I heard Kuya Del silently sobs as he buries himself on his arms.

"Kuya Del... you are a supportive brother for us. I've never regretted having you. I want to be one of the person to stand before you when you feel targetted by people, Kuya Del. I stand by your side."

"You're lying. You hate me for dating a boy!"

That hit me. "Who said I hate you doing that?! I didn't see anything wrong with that! If you just know how much I hate papa for talking shit about gays."

He wiped his tears and finally looked at me. "A-Am I okay to you?"

I smiled. "There's nothing wrong with you, kuya. I love you back."

He chuckled as he kept wiping his tears. "You're making me happy... and hungry."

Suddenly, my damn phone rang. The keypad phone! *It literally ruined the drama. Who would call this late?!*

I read who's calling on the screen. It's damn China, of course. I answered it quickly and with an annoyance. "HELLO!"

"Have you heard the news about North Korea?"

My eyebrows bunched. "No? What's up with him?"

"He announced to his people they're free to go out of that country while he stays there."

My eyes widened. "Woah. Very... unusual to happen. Why?"

"I don't know what came up in his mind to decide that. But... there was this night we fought. I haven't talked to him since then."

"Oh."

"Any ideas how to say sorry to him?"

"Why ask me?! I didn't even know him much! You called in a middle of an important moment and asked me about a non-sense matter! WHY ME?!"

"I don't really know who else to ask. I don't have much friends to go to. Please. Just give me an idea for now."

I groaned, sighed and rubbed my forehead as I started thinking. "Why not try giving him a gift? Chocolates. Why don't you ask South Korea for help?! He's the brother!"

"A gift is a good idea. And yes, I will ask South too. Thank you, Martial."

Then, China turned down the call.

I put the keypad phone down on the table and rubbed my face with my hands. I tried to bring myself back to the real scene. I smiled at Kuya Del, who was watching me. I picked up the utensils and started eating with him.

I had burger steak and fries because... they're the best.

"China?"

"Yeah," I answered kuya.

I suddenly had a thought. In case I'll be like Kuya Del and... be with China— **just. in. case**— I should know how to maintain that kind of relationship. Oh, and also before that, I should know how to tell if I'm becoming *that* or not.

I cleared my throat. "Kuya?"

"Yes?"

"How did you know you're... you're that?"

"Hmm." He drank his water and wiped his mouth with the tissue. "I noticed being gay when I realized I had fun looking at boys than girls. Hey, tell me if I'm making you feel uncomfortable, *ha?*"

"Yes, kuya. I will."

"Then, I managed to accept it as a part of me. There were like me in the field. I can tell I'm influenced by them."

"How did your relationship go?"

"Ah, it's challenging, of course. You gotta be impenetratable by judgements. You two have to be strong for each other."

I nodded when I got the answers I need.

"Also, Martial. I have this crazy thought. This will be under... the dark secrets we have about the family. No. It's more like a rumor."

"Tell me, kuya."

"Phil said when he was in Spanish Empire's ship, the king always looks for *papa*, right?"

"Yeah."

"As I remember, when Phil was gone, there were this soldiers that looks for *papa* too. ONLY for *papa*."

"Maybe, because of the invasion matters."

"But for me, who's gay, I think it's because of another matter."

My eyes widened in realization. I get his point. "You think Spanish Empire is looking for *papa* because..."

"He had an interest to *papa*."

"No fucking way."

"Th-That's just a what if, Martial Law! Don't tell *papa* I'm thinking about him that way!"

I drank my pineapple juice. *That's an interesting thought. I'm intrigued to know if it's true.*

Chapter Fifteen

WARNING
Many Time Skips

[This chapter isn't much important. I just wanted to ruin South and North : "3]

* * *

PYONGYANG NORTH KOREA

- - □□◦□□-□□◦□□ - -

*[14 Hours Later,
10 AM in North Korea]*

I fixed my tie and suit before going out of my room with a few guards with me.

I felt a lot more confident after knowing there are no citizens anymore in my country and only few in my military were left. I felt better than having many near me.

I received a letter of request from China to talk to him privately in my office. He said there we'd talk about something important. I was intrigued. It can be about cutting ties. So, I didn't hesitate to make his wish come true. He said privately though, but I still want to assure my security.

I arrived at my office.

And the pieces of me that I gathered in the previous days fell apart again after seeing South Korea with him.

I quickly lost myself. Every word that I prepared for this moment disappeared from my head.

South smiled at me and placed down a box on the table. He was about to run at me, "Hyeong!" *[Brother!]*

I stepped back before he even got near me. I tried to avoid him but he insisted on himself. He wrapped his arms around me tightly while I was pushing him away.

I became so annoyed that I gathered all my remaining strength to ***push him away as hard as I could***. South slid on the floor. And looked back at me with a surprise.

How can he become surprised with my attitude? I have been like this since I started living miles away from him.

South Korea is annoying. I hate him for being such a capitalist. Too loud like the United States. There's nothing serious about him.

"What's wrong with you?!"

"You know what's wrong with me." I answered him seriously. I turned my glare at China. "Why did you bring him here? To brainwash me?"

"Oh, *hyeong*. I came here myself! I was worried for you!"

"I remember your words saying ***you don't see me as your brother anymore*** and now you're calling me that. I hate you."

"Wow. Instead of appreciating me, you're hating me more. How can you be worse?!"

"You know what. I'm not talking to you two anymore. I'm already drained."

As I turned my back, someone held my hand and pulled me back. It's China with his begging eyes.

"I came here to say sorry to you."

"I don't need it." I pulled my hand back and continued walking away.



[6 Days later]

"*Sa-jang-nim*, you haven't eaten your lunch and breakfast. Are you okay there?"

I heard the last private left in my military asked behind the door of my room.

Man, I feel so weak but I know that's because of my dumbness. I had no appetite to eat. I locked the door so no one could distract my peaceful moments. And now I'm slowly dying for sure.

The private knocked again on my door. "Sir?"

I covered myself with the blanket and faced the other side of the bed. *I don't want to eat.*

. . .

"Why didn't you leave?" I asked after a moment of silence.

It took him a few seconds to answer. "I can't leave you completely alone, *sa-jang-min*."

My stomach growled suddenly. I hummed as I pressed it.

"Sir, isn't it dark there? Y-You should go out to have some sunlight."

No one wants to see me anymore.

"You might get sick, sir."

I'm starting to feel annoyed. For such a person who was one of those I controlled a lot, he shouldn't be doing this. He should've gone mad at me like the others did. What makes him stay?

I felt defeated and my stomach kept growling. So, I pushed myself up on the bed and walked my way to the door. It unlocked as I twist the doorknob.

I saw this soldier in my front and a computer set and wires on the floor. He told me days ago that he installed all the CCTV cameras here so, he could tell me what was happening outside this building.

He helped me sit down on the floor in front of the food he prepared. *Oh*, it smelled good. I missed food. I missed eating.

"You look thinner, sir."

"Will you stop that?"

He sat beside me. "I think, no. You would become lonelier if I shut up."

I picked up the food in a styrofoam and a utensil to eat. I looked at the monitor viewing footages. *Ah yes*, what I'm seeing is not different from what the private told me in the previous days.
There's China in front of the building entrance.

"Didn't I tell you to talk to China and order him to go away?"

"S-Sa-jang-nim, I already did. But he kept telling me he'll be going here everyday until you talk to him yourself."

I leaned on the wall and heavily sighed. "How stupid he is."

"I, uhm... I don't think he's stupid, sir."

"Hmm? Why?"

"According to how I see you around him, you seemed hurt by him. I think he wanted to fix it by insisting to talk to you to say sorry. He attempted that last week."

"He said enough. I'm not listening to anything he'll say."

"But, don't you want to be okay?"

"I am making myself okay."

"By isolating yourself from the world?"

I glared at him. "What are you trying to do to me this time?"

"I'm trying to help you think of something better to do."

I felt heavy. I really don't want to rely on anyone's opinions and

sides. I don't want to appreciate help. I believe I can do all things myself.

Yet, I became speechless. I just returned eating.

"Sir, when you said you want everyone to leave your country, I interpreted it in another way. I'm thinking you meant *you want to see someone who'll stay and think of you*. So, I did. No one wants to be alone. Everyone needs someone. I know you need China even though you don't want to admit it."

"Are you saying I'm scared?"

"Definitely, sir."

"I- *He can be right*. I looked away. I put down my food on the floor and hugged my legs. "If I admit that, everyone will call me weak. I was already weak when I had feelings for him. If I never had that, I wouldn't become like this. I would remain unbent. I wouldn't do anything stupid."

"But, feelings make you feel better, don't they?"

"How free?"

"You said it. You could feel the world is close to you since you loved him. Isn't that an amazing feeling?"

I stared at the wall in front of me. I breathed heavily and started thinking. My heart began to beat faster every second I think of China. Am I excited to talk to him again? *I could be*.

I stood up and fixed my shirt and my hair.

"Sa-jang-min, are you going downstairs?"

"Ye, I'll talk to him."

"But... you're in your pajamas, sir?"

"No one's around anymore. No one else will see me looking like this."



When I opened the door, I saw China kneeling on the floor. He looked up to me and our eyes met.

What I'm seeing broke my heart. His sleepy eyes. Pale lips. Messy hair and thinner body. He seemed weak. *What was he doing this week?!*

I quickly came close to him and touched his face. "What the heck happened to you?! Are you okay?! Did you get sleep, at least?! Have you had breakfast?!"

"I was waiting for you."

"I-I'm sorry. Okay?" I kept checking him. "Look, what you did to yourself! You became thinner!"

"How have you been? You put your borders down."

"What does it have to do with you?!"

"They're all blaming me for what happened to you. The world was affected by your decision."

"H-How?!"

"Your citizens don't have anywhere to stay in. They just got out of here and you're not allowing them to be back. S-South Korea cut ties with me because of what I did to you."

I hissed. "He shouldn't be doing that. Everything's my decision."

China began to sob and bowed his head lower. "P-Please. F-Forgive me. M-My words th-that I told you. I-I was insensitive-"

"China, hey. It's okay." I patted his back. "You were just honest. It's not bad."

"Look what happened to you! You isolated yourself... b-because of what I told you!"

I looked away for a moment to think. *China did nothing wrong to me. Honesty is never wrong.* I breathed heavily. *I guess I should take action on this so he won't feel heavy too much.* "I'll do something to end the problem, okay? You don't need to worry anymore."

"Let me help you, Korea-"

"China, no. Actually, you shouldn't be involved or blamed for this. Let me work on this for you."

I watched him wipe his tears. "Sorry... again."

As I look down at him even longer, flashbacks of that night are rushing in my mind. I felt that **pain** again at this moment. The heaviness. But, I shouldn't blame him, as I said. He was honest. It's better than seeing him forcing himself to love me.

"I forgive you." I calmly said as I keep on comforting him.

"What're you going to do now? Do you need my help?"

I went back to thinking.

. . .

"I'll talk to South... alone. It's the first step I'll take."

Chapter Sixteen

[Promise me you'll read this fully! This is where the fun starts! Also, the myth mentioned here is made up by me. JUST READ THIS ALL!]

Oh. "Ha-neul" means sky. "Byeol" means star. OwO. Sweet nicknames, aren't they~?]

* * *

[Timeskip]

Now, I am walking my way straight to South Korea's office. Luckily, I'm allowed to go inside. I thought my brother would tell me to *fuck* off like what I did to him. I know every person who walks past me is watching my way, but I tend to ignore them. I had a bit of confidence with myself since my soldier came with me here.

As I came closer to the office, there were more and more soldiers around. I'm thinking South called them over to make himself protected from what threat I may bring. But, surprise. I brought no harm here.

I hate apologizing, actually. I am titled the most strict, independent, heartless country in the world. Apologizing isn't— or **SHOULDN'T** be part of my personality. But, he is my brother. I shouldn't forget we used to grow up together. He was my happiness. He has the part of my heart that I couldn't live without. Also, I'm considering his feelings. Maybe, he became sad after I pushed him away.

Anyways.

I arrived at his room. I let the soldier open the door with me. A group of them came inside after me. I felt cornered and uncomfortable. I glanced at my private and saw him fully watching his sides.

South Korea seemed to have just finished cleaning his desk.

I gulped.

"Good evening, b— South Korea."

"Good evening too." South Korea looked dead serious, like he was unhappy to see me.

I cleared my throat. "Uhm. Can we talk... alone?"

"Why?"

According to my mind, it meant "*Fuck no. What if you're here to kill me?!*"

I answered him, "Our topic... will only involve us two. I only want us in this room."

I watched his eyes look at the soldiers behind me. He nodded at them, followed by multiple footsteps going away. I also gave a signal to my own soldier to leave. He obeyed.

There was a moment of silence between us. I actually waited for him to tell me to sit down. But, no.

South sat on his seat. "Why are you here, then, North Korea?"

. . .

"I'm... I'm here to ask for forgiveness."

"What has gotten into your mind to apologize? You don't like doing such things."

"***You're my brother.*** I shouldn't have pushed you away."

He chuckled. "Funny."

"I'm serious, South Korea. I'm sorry for what I did to you there. Sorry I treated you like nobody."

"If you have other intentions for this chance, tell me directly. Don't sugarcoat your words."

"*Ha-neul*."

It is the nickname I used to call him. It means *sky* in English. I'm calling him that again to reach his heart. To tell him indirectly that I'm sincere.

"*Ha-neul*, we've been away from each other for years. I ain't gonna lie that there were times I didn't think of you. In those years, I wasn't there with you. So... I thought... I am, indeed, not deserving of being called a *brother* by you."

South Korea turned his back on me.

I still continued, "It's okay for me. But... please accept my apology for pushing you away when you tried to reach me when I was drowning in sadness. I needed that... but I rejected it because of my pride—"

My voice cracked. My eyes felt wet.

I still continued, "I can let China go. But, I can't let you, *Ha-neul*, be away from me."

"Do you hear yourself, North?"

"Y-Yes. Loud and clear."

"Do you believe yourself?"

"I said no lie. Of course, I believe what I said."

South brushed his fingers on his hair and sighed. "Why did you have to take a long time to realize all that?!"

"I-I'm s-sorry," I said between my tears.

"It sounds unrealistic now! What do you need from me now, huh?! What did you come here for?!"

"**Y-Y-You!** I-I need you. Y-You're the only one I can truly call a family..."

I couldn't hold on to my tears anymore. I burst them all out and fell down on my knees. For... the second time this year... I cried hard for saying unusual yet truthful words coming from my heart. Words that I didn't know I'd been longing to tell him

Oh, God. Why does love have to be this heavy?

In the middle of my drama, I felt arms wrapped around me.

"Byeol..."

Oh... that sweet voice... calling my name.

I cannot describe how relieved I am after hearing that from him. *I needed it.* He is with me now. M-My brother... that I neglected years ago. He is with me again.

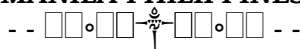
I held his hand tight as I managed to smile while I cried. I pulled him even closer and also hugged him back.

"Byeol, I worry for you..."

"I won't leave you again, *Ha-neul*... I'll be here for you from now on..."



MANILA PHILIPPINES



[Meanwhile,
In Philip's Point of View]

"Sir..."

"Will you freakin' *shut up for a moment?!'*"

"B-But, sir-"

"If you just know how *fully loaded my mind is!*"

Martial Law is a pain in the ass. Within this week, he missed a lot of meetings and training to attend! As if he forgets them one by one! He has a planner but he's not checking them! Now, everyone's coming at me to call me out to replace him! My own schedules are bothered!

Why do I have to live with such annoying human being in my head?!

Currently, I'm fixing my schedules for this month. I'm combining Martial's and my schedule. He's not doing anything from now on!

I slid my planner to my secretary. "**That** is my new schedule. From now on, you're not taking any appointments for Martial. I talked to him about this."

"Sir, take a look at the news from Korea."

Though I'm completely annoyed by this, I still bothered to check what she was sharing with me.

The Divided Korea Reunites Today

Ah yes. Another unexpected event. I proceeded reading the article.

After a sudden wave of light from the Blue House, the place where President South Korea stays in, the Koreans' flags, as in ALL OF THEM, changed into the old Korean Peninsula's flag. This could mean that the two divided countries ... goes back reunited like before the Cold War.

"Now, what?"

"Sir, don't you remember the myth we have?"

I narrowed my eyes. "Which one?"

"The one about an infant with a glowing flag that kills people near him?"

"Yeah. What's with that?"

My secretary shrugged. "I just recalled that since... the article also

said the light came from the Korean brothers. Didn't United Nations say that *once a country's flag glows, it means it did something contributing to peace?*"

"But that infant's flag from our myth glows when he does something evil," I continued what she said.

"Exactly, sir."

"So, now that the glow has happened..."

"The myth might be true."

I suddenly felt worried. This is a myth created during Spanish colonization, said *papa*. So, if the infant was born in that period, he might be alive until now.

But, myths are made-up stories. It shouldn't be true!

I looked at her once again. "Let's focus for now on what's happening right now. Predictions like that aren't necessary."

"It's just for readiness, sir. He could be hiding somewhere, training himself to murder more people—"

"Secretary!" I shouted to stop her from talking about it. "I don't want more problems to be added for now. Let's go to our scheduled meeting."

I just started walking when I heard a phone ring. I turned back to my secretary and watched her hurriedly get her phone from her pocket.

"Ah, sir. It's Mr. Katipunan."

Why would he call my secretary— Oh. Right. My phone's silent.

"Oh, Philippi—"

I adjusted my hand to her. "Just give me that."

"S-Sir, Sir Phil wants—"

I pulled the phone from her hand and she was shocked that she screamed. "Sorry, sorry." I placed the phone on my ear. "Pa?"

"Thank, goodness..."

My eyebrows bunched together as I heard him sigh on the phone. "Why, pa? Is there something wrong?"

*"No. I'm just relieved
it's you on the phone.
Where's Martial?"*

"Obviously, in my head. I'm not allowing him to take over today. I took all his time."

*"Good. Phil, promise
me you'll keep it that
way."*

"W-Why? Did he do something wrong?"

*"Nothing. But, I think
it's better if you keep
him inside."*

"P-Pa, I don't understand."

*"Just do what I said.
Good bye."*

He turned down the call.

"MARTIAL!" My door suddenly slammed open. It is Kuya Del who came inside without any knock on the door. "Oh. Hi, Phil!"

"What the heck are you doing here, kuya? I'm late for the meeting!"

"A-Actually, *papa* called me to visit you for a moment. You weren't answering his calls."

What a disaster! I literally cannot think of anything that could make them this worried! "Kuya Del, what's wrong? *Papa* told me to keep

Martial silent and now you're here. What's going on?!"

Kuya Del was silent for a moment. He looked away and back.
"Uhhh, I don't know. I'm called to be here. I don't know."

Weird.

"You can go back to where you're from, Kuya Del. Thank you for the visit."

I was just about to walk past him when he suddenly held my arm.
"Phil, are you mad at Martial Law?"

"Well, yeah. He became irresponsible lately that he made me do his work."

"Can you... be chill around him? Like, don't ever make him really mad?"

"Yeah, yeah. Whatever."

"Promise me that. Please."

I still cannot think why I have to supervise Martial. They won't even tell me a reason. I'm starting to doubt Del that he doesn't know what *papa* is thinking right now. He seemed to know something.

I just don't have time for matters like this. I have a lot of work to do.

The more I think about this mystery, the more I'm feeling concerned. I feel something bad will happen. To avoid that, I guess I'll just have to keep Martial inside.

No questions to be asked.

Chapter Seventeen

MARTIAL LAW

- - □□◦□□-□□◦□□ - -

I hate my life so much. Why did God let me live like this?

Negative thoughts. Regret. Anger. Hate. They are rushing in my mind right now. I couldn't believe my own brother, who I share this body with, would tell me to stay inside his mind and take over less frequently. *Wow*. It's like he wished me to be gone FOREVER as if I did nothing else but to ruin his work.

Home is unsafe anymore. I don't want to go there. Papa agreed to what Philip wanted me to do. They both made the house a home for homophobic people. Kuya Del is not there. He's a better choice to talk with but I'm too lazy to reach him now.

As I climb the mountain of rocks I used to visit... I am wishing China is here too. He is the only person I know who'll listen to me. I believe he can at least make me happy.

I finally reached the summit. I quickly looked around to search for him.

Phew. I relaxed my chest by exhaling the heaviness in it when I found him looking at the view of the blue sea and the sunset. I suddenly felt excited. I ran towards him and shouted his name. "China!"

I didn't bother to check his reaction or hear his words. I knelt down beside him and wrapped my arms around him tightly. The tears I was holding back since that time I talked to Philip spilled out from my eyes. I gripped his shirt and sobbed. I felt his hand patting my back.

Oh... home, this is.

"This day must've become bad for you. What happened?" I heard his calming voice ask me.

I slowly let go of him. I avoided eye contact with him. I kept my head bowed. I, then, answered, "No one wants me here. I shouldn't have existed." I hugged my legs and buried my head on my arms.

"Who told you that?"

"It is said to me *indirectly*! Philip told me that papa asked him to tell me not to take over anymore!"

"Why would your father-"

"That's the question. Philip didn't tell me **why** but I should follow it anyway."

How bullshit this life that's given to me.

I continued talking, "They both made me realize they don't see me as a person but **JUST AN ALTER THAT PHILIP SHOULD GET RID OFF BECAUSE I'M A MENTAL DISORDER!**" I sarcastically laughed. "Fucking funny. Ever since we found out I'm the dead twin brother of Philip, papa started to take control of my life. Telling me not to take over much. Always follow what Philip tells me to do because *he is the owner of the body*. Fuck this shit. It's like he told me, '*Now that you're an alter, you have no right to make your own choices*'. How ridiculous!" I gripped my hair. "Why did God let me have this kind of life? Was I stupid in my previous life?!" I looked up to the skies. "**KILL ME, THEN! NOW!** Oh, I suddenly realize I can't do that because I cannot kill the body I have but I don't own. Fucking shit."

"Alters disappear from the host's mind when the host learns to stand alone and isn't broken mentally anymore, right?"

"Correct. Hehe. I existed here just to be Philip's secret weapon when he can't handle shit anymore." I buried my face back again on my arms. "*I don't want to disappear yet*. I haven't done anything much. Everything I did is for Philip... not for me. I haven't gone to Ukraine, Germany, Japan, and Antarctica! I haven't tried sushi. I haven't tried diving. I'm jealous of Philip. Why can't I have the life

he has? I lived... to disappear."

China patted my back again. "Calm down, Martial. I'm sad you're feeling that way. For someone who isn't selfish like you, you don't deserve how you're treated now."

"There's no chance I'll live normal, China."

"Hey, Martial. Try looking at the bright side! Everything has a reason to happen anyway." *Is he trying to make me feel better?*

I faced him. "What's the reason for this? To make me suffer?"

China shook his head. "Philip took away your responsibilities. He took away your... job. Right?"

"Yeah. Now, I'm useless."

"No. Didn't that make you free?"

"Tell me your point, please."

"Now, that Philip can handle his own, you have time now to handle and mind yourself!"

I looked up to process what he just said.

...

...

...

Now, that Philip will start minding everything, he won't need me anymore.

He won't care for me.

My eyes widened in that realization. I turned my face back to China. "Are you saying I can now start doing what I want to do now?!"

"YES! You have to fill your remaining days with memories you wish

to have!"

I. Felt. Excited.

Like the blood in my veins started rushing! Ideas are coming to my mind! I started imagining what I might do from now! *Holy shit. This is freedom!*

"HOLY SHIT, CHINA! YOU'RE A GENIUS!"

"Ehe. Xiè xiè-"

"It's okay for me if I do all that whenever Phil rests. I'm also keeping all this a secret so he won't stop me anymore!"

"That's... That's good... I guess?"

"YOU SHOULD AGREE!" I stood up and rubbed my hands on my face. "Sheeeeeeeesh. Where should I start?! Where should I start?!"

Flashback

"You're not used to compliments, I see. When you're finally in a relationship, you'd get that a lot."

I remembered what Del told me.

Shit. Relationships.

Hm. Sounds interesting.

"China." I turned my body to face him.

"Yeah?"

"I want to be in a relationship."

He quickly looked away. Then, looked down. Then, looked back to me. "Really?"

"Yes. I haven't experienced loving anyone. Everyone just sucks. Except you. You helped me a lot."

He bowed his head again. Licked his lips. Cleared his throat. Then, looked back at me again. "I see."

"But, who the fuck would love someone like me who doesn't even totally existing?" I crossed my arms.

. . .

I glanced at China. Looked at him from his white polo down to his black, shining shoes. Glanced to his eyes that just looked away from me. "Hmm. Can you... Can help me... with this?"

"How help?"

"I want to experience this relationship thingy... with you."

I'm serious. This isn't a joke. I badly want to feel loved. This is SERIOUS. But I feel my cheeks heating.

I mean, guys. If this will be my first and last relationship in this life, I want it to be thrilling. If Phil and papa will find out I'm making out with a fellow guy, I might experience tragic or dramatic romance. *Oh, dear God.* That sounds exciting as fuck!

"Sure! I'm happy to be chosen by you!" It took a minute for China to respond.

"WHEN ARE WE GONNA START?! NOW?! NOW, RIGHT?!"

"YEAH! WE CAN START NOW!"

"Wait, how do you guys start romantic relationships?"

"Hmm." China looked around to look for something. He walked around the bushes. I watched him pick a flower. No. A lot of flowers. He also picked long leaves. *Ah, yes.* A do-it-yourself bouquet. How creative.

He walked back to me and adjusted his hand holding that bouquet-looking thing to me. "We start from courting. Or just... asking someone to be their... boyfriend."

I crossed my arms and smirked at him. "Do it, then." *Try me, you poor thing.*

He did... what I didn't expect him to do. He knelt down on the ground in front of me! When he looked up to me, my cheeks heated up worse! *Conceal. Conceal. Don't feel. Don't feel. Oh, shit.* My heart's beating fast too.

I looked away when I couldn't resist this feeling anymore.

"Will you be my boyfri-"

"Y-Y-You know what, you did it too much!" I received the bouquet from his hand and admired it. "You did good. "

"Is that a yes?"

Oh, yeah. I forgot. I glanced down at him. And smiled. "Yes. I am now your-"

"哦，是的！谢谢你，哦，天哪！你实现了我的愿望!"

I became surprised about his reaction yet confused about what he just said. He suddenly started jumping and cheering in Chinese, which I don't even understand.

He pulled my hand and showed me the happiest expression. He knelt down back. "I am thankful for this moment. I've been dreaming of... to be with you. Though, I know this is only an act because you just wanted to experience this... but thank you."

...

He wants to be with me?

For what...

Have I done something good to him?

S-Someone... wants me with them...

He dreamed of being with me...

I smiled. "Did I say this will only be just an act?"

Now, he showed me his watery eyes. "O-Oh... i-is it not?"

"It's not, China."

Now, he's breaking down. He started crying. He hugged my legs while saying Chinese words again.

"Uhm, China. I believe what we should do next is call signs, right?"

He's still sobbing.

"China?"

Finally, he stopped to wipe his tears from his eyes and fix himself. He stood up and acted nothing happened. He sniffed first. "Y-Yes. Wait, what are the signs?"

I put my hands on my waist. "Call signs! Like... nicknames... something."

"OHHH! That. Yes. Nicknames."

. . .

"I can't think of anything to call you," he said after a minute of silence between us.

I took a moment to think too. "I hear some Filipino couples calling each other '*mahal*' which is love in English. It sounds so sweet. I'll call you that!" I adjusted my face to him. "Heh. *Mahal*."

"Hm! Cute! I'm calling you *Xīngān*. It means the liver and heart."

I crossed my eyebrows in disgust. "EEW! WHY WOULD YOU CALL ME YOUR LIVER AND HEART?!"

China chuckled. "A human cannot live without a liver and heart. Calling you that... means I couldn't live without you."

Oh.

OH.

Aww. Sweeeeeeet.

That made me smile. "I see. I understand it now."

Hold on a second. Isn't that the... words I heard from my mind when I almost fall from the cliff?

If that's déjà vu... does that mean... in my previous life... I was with a Chinese person... or him.

Holy shit.

Now, I was completely distracted. I became curious about what kind of life I had back then.

Wait. When I lived here, I was a baby. How come I met someone-

"This day is the most memorable. Let's write the date on the ground to remember the memories!"

Boom. Snapped back to reality. I realized I was blank. It took me seconds to completely bring my thoughts back here. "Yeah. That's a great idea."

What kind of life have I had before?

. . .

I felt China's hand wrapped around mine. "Thank you again, Mar- I mean... *Xīngān*. I promise I'll do everything to be deserving of your love."

My thoughts are cleared as I keep hearing him talking. His eyes... mirrored the view of hope. His voice is a calming, relaxing music. His hold is like pillows wrapped around my body.

So, I'm really into this, huh?

"I promise I'll do the same, *mahal*."

I hugged him and laid my head on his chest. I closed my eyes as I

listened to his heartbeat.

Yes. Home, indeed.

♡□□□□♡

A|N

*The Chinese sentence up there means "OH, YES! THANK YOU, OH
HEAVENS! YOU GRANTED MY WISH!"*

hehehehe

*Sorry for the very late update. I am in Bohol right now. And this is the
only time I got my **will to write** back.*

huhu i miss u all mwaps

we only have 3 chapters left~

Chapter Eighteen

WARNING:

A lot of timeskips againn
This may be boring but yea

A|N

I'll do this quick :")) I forgot my other ideas for this chapter

* * *

[*The Next Day*]

"HIIIIIIII, MAHAHAHAHAAL!" I screamed the nickname I gave him when I saw him in our meeting place today. My heart beat fast and drove my legs insane that caused me to run towards him.

China wrapped his arms around me as I do it back tightly like there'll be no tomorrow. "Ah, *xīngán*!"

I felt him kiss me on my forehead.

When we parted away, I remembered I was holding a black box in my hand.

"Here!" I warmly smiled at him as I handed him the box. "It's a watch given to me by a mate of mine in the army. I haven't used it since."

I watched him open the box. His eyes widened and lips curved to smile at it. "It's beautiful. It looks like the ones we made."

"But, it said it's made in Switzerland."

"Yeah. Don't you think we don't make copies of it?"

I was left speechless. He wasn't surprised, then-

"Just kidding," he chuckled. "This is one of the unique watches I got."

Thank you. It still looks new, hm?"

I felt relieved. I thought he didn't like it.

China continued, "I'm sorry I don't have a gift for you."

I wavered my hand. "Bah! It's okay! Seeing you here and knowing you're okay are already great gifts for me." I muttered to myself my next words. *"Having you is already the greatest gift I could have."*

"Hm? What is it?"

"Ah, nothing! Just... small thoughts."



[*The Next Day Again*]

"*Xīngán!* I now have a gift for you!"

As we sat down on the ground, he gave me a planner with a leather cover as a gift. I couldn't resist smiling when I saw small sampaguitas taped on it. "I prefer rosemaries over this but thanks."

"But, isn't Sampaguita your national flower? And its scent is said to be relaxing. I thought you'd like it."

My eyes widened in surprise after hearing his explanation. Does that mean he did research about flowers to know what I might like? Man, I pity the sampaguitas he picked from wherever he got this.

I became speechless for a moment.

"D-Don't... you like it?"

I glanced at him and looked back at the planner again.

"I thought of giving you a planner because Phil keeps ranting about you not being responsible for plans. I thought that could help. I can throw away the sampaguitas for y-"

"NO WAY!" I quickly moved away from him before he even got his hand on the flowers. "I LIKE ITS SCENT! I'M KEEPING THE

FLOWERS WITH THE PLANNER UNTIL IT WITHER."

"I can pick rosemaries for you tomorrow!"

"I changed my mind. I like sampaguitas now."

"A-Are you sure?"

I nodded surely. "From now, I'll remember this moment every time I see sampaguitas! You are just as sweet as them."

He moved close to me that our shoulders touch. "You are as angelic as them."

I suddenly froze while my heart started to beat fast. I tightened my hold on the planner as I feel this rushing *wholesomeness* in my chest.

"I found out the Filipinos hang necklaces out of sampaguitas on saint sculptures. I thought it was so special that even the gods in heaven like that flower. I wanted to create one for you but I was too busy and I had a meeting with Phil this afternoon. It's a simple, small, white flower but it is undeniably beautiful and cute. I was stunned when I saw a bunch of it in a garden I walked by."

"Hold up. So, you actually did pick this flower from the garden of the owner you don't even know?!"

"Yeah!"

"That... *is so cool and wrong!* I wish I could do wrong things freely too."

"Like what?"

"Driving over the speed limit."

"Ah, by the way." China reached a paper bag from his side and handed it to me. "I want you to give this to Philip. He looked tired when I arrived in his office and his guard told me he likes coffee."

I took the paper bag from him and took a peek inside of it. *Oh, my God. Is this a dream?!* There are 3 dozen sachet of coffee here and

they're all imported! This is like a year's stock of coffee!

I smiled gratefully to China. "Philip would love to receive this."

"I prefer my name not to be told to him. He won't like it if he knew it's from me."

I narrowed my eyes as I process what he said. "Hm! Okay, then!"



[*The Next Day Again*]

"YOU'LL NEVER GONNA BELIEVE-"

I was interrupted by the bouquet of flowers that I "*unintentionally*" saw on China's hand. A bouquet colored black and gold. There are roses, both red and white, and daisies. This, for sure, is another moment of being unable to react quickly about unusual things I haven't seen in my life.

"What is that for?" I asked calmly... though I'm sure it'll be for me.

"This is for you, *xīngán*!" He sounded cheerful. He doesn't know what will happen if people see me holding it on my way home.

"Y-You don't need to bring flowers to me. But thank you for bothering." I smiled and slightly bowed my head as a part of thanking him. I carried the bouquet on my arm... I just kept smiling at it. It is cute... and I felt cute at the same time.

"What was it you were about to say again to me?"

I was snapped back to reality. "Right! Well, you wouldn't believe Philip liked your gift for him. I told him it's from you."

His expression quickly shifted to worrying and fear.

"I told you. He liked it, *mahal*. He was like, '*Oh, what a thoughtful person he is. I like coffee anyway so I'm taking this.*'" I crossed my arms and jokingly frowned. "But, he won't let me have a sachet to taste the imported coffee."

I heard China chuckled. "I thought you like wine like any other beverage."

"That's true! I believe in wine supremacy."

"Then, I'll buy you wine tomorrow as a gift."

"Aren't you being too much in giving gifts? I'm afraid you'll end up in bankruptcy for spending too much on people who won't help you in business matters."

"I don't have anything or anyone to spend my money on except myself! It is my decision to fill your days with things you probably haven't experienced yet." After a short pause, he exclaimed, "Oh."

"What?"

"Have you considered going to my country to see the Great Wall of China?!"

"Oh, shit! I want thaaaaaaat! But, I know Philip won't let me!"

"Then, I'll invite Philip over to have a little vacation with me. Do you think he'll come? I think he trusts me now that he accepts my gift for him."

"Hmmmmmm. I don't think he'll go with you."

China clapped his hands together. "We'll see tomorrow!"



[... *Again*]

I am playing my guitar while waiting for China to arrive here on the cliff. I got here before him for the first time in a while. I am practicing the song I just learned today from Kuya Del.

A minute later, I heard footsteps getting louder. I turned my face back and saw China approaching my position with an unhappy face.

"Mahal, why do you look like that? What happened?"

He sat first on my side and looked deeply on the scenery in front of us. He was silent for a moment.

Is this the face of bankruptcy ?

Is he just tired?

Is it North Korea again?

What is in his mind right now? I wish I could read it.

I kept on staring at him while waiting for his answer.

. . .

"Philip doesn't like to see the Great Wall."

PFFT. I almost laughed. I thought there'll be a serious or big reason behind his face. I didn't expect that to be a big deal for him. I'm sorry.

I wasn't surprised. Phil told me what happened during that moment. He couldn't believe China would ask him for a stay in their country. And guess what. He thought there was something behind it. It could be a tactic to kidnap Philip and torture him like hell.

I patted China's back. "Don't worry about it much, *mahal*. It's not like he thinks the Great Wall sucks. I think he's just really busy that he wouldn't mind going out for a vacation." I strummed my guitar.

"I could make it a free vacation for your whole family!"

"Yo! *Mahal*, isn't that too much generosity?! I appreciate that but I don't like you to spend too much on us."

He sighed. "Here."

A bouquet of lavender .

I bunched my eyebrows together, not expecting he'd give me flowers again. "Why do you give me flowers every time we meet?"

"You-"

"I know. I heard it before that I'm cute. The flowers are cute. But, you don't need to buy me these!"

He looked down. "You smile whenever I bring you flowers. I thought they would make you happy."

. . .

AAAAAWWW!! REALLY?!

I uncontrollably smiled at what he said.

"I want to see you smile everyday," he continued.

I pinched his arm teasingly. "You seem to observe me every time! How cute of you! Thank you so much, *mahaaaaaal!*"

I sniffed the lavender. *Hmmmm*. Relaxation, indeed.

"Is that your guitar? I didn't know you played guitar."

I gave him my attention as I placed my bouquet on the ground. "Yeah! I only know a few songs." I brushed my finger on the strings again.

"Sing me one! Sing me one! Filipinos are known to be singers! I want to hear you sing!"

I shrugged and chuckled. "Okay, then."

I began strumming the strings according to the chords...

I sang...

*You are my sunshine
My only sunshine
You make me happy
When skies are grey*

*You never know, dear
How much I love you
So, please don't take*

My sunshine away

. . .

"There-"

"I love you more too, *xīngán*."

. . .

. . .

OH! The lyrics said '*You never know how much I love you*'. Oh, I get that. I get that.

I adored his smile at me. The more those words he just said echoes in my head, the faster my heart beats for him. *Oh, my gosh*. I'm happy I'm with this man. I'm soooooo gay for him.

"You liked it?!" I asked him with excitement for his answer.

"Of course, I do! Yours is my favorite version of that song! It's just soooo..." and *mahal* did the chef's kiss.

I leaned on his shoulder, then. And enjoyed the silence and the cold breeze. I felt him wrap his arms around me and pulled me close for a tighter hug.

"I hope we'll stay together this way..." I said those words with a bit of a feeling of hopelessness, considering how people might see me or us like this.

China rubbed my arm and kissed my forehead. "We will. I prayed for it, *xīngán*..."

As I closed my eyes, I began to feel comfortable and sleepy. I don't know why I suddenly felt like I wanted this kind of rest.

Oh...

I want another thing...

This time I let my own body move on its own.

I placed my hand over China's and looked up at his beautiful eyes. I think he knows what to do. He leaned closer to me and I closed my eyes. Our lips touched each other for a warm kiss.

Later, as we parted away, he caressed my cheek.

"I love you, *mahal*," I said first before him.

'So, you forgot I am here. Right, Martial Law?'

Chapter Nineteen

Oh... Oh no... I forgot to block him from hearing me.

I went completely blank and frozen. I couldn't think of anything to do now.

'Martial Law, give the consciousness to me. Now'

I kept silent. I looked up to China's eyes while I breathed heavily.

"China, run. Leave me here."

"W-Why, xīngán? What's the matter?"

I quickly stood up and moved away from him. "J-Just go! H-He's taking over!"

'What's taking you so loooong, Martial Law? Is he there?'

"No! He's not!"

'THEN, BACK OFF FROM THE LIGHT THIS INSTANT!'

"CHINA! GO!"

I suddenly felt my hands become light as the air. I lost my control over them. They were wrapped around my neck tightly. I couldn't resist them. I'm starting to be breathless by this.

'I heard that AGAIN! Why are you lying to me, Martial Law?! Why are you doing this to me?!'

"Le- Let go-- from me-!"

'THIS IS MY BODY, Martial Law! You are just a fruit of my trauma and YOU'LL disappear soon! You shouldn't make decisions on your own!'

After all the tries I did, I finally had my control back on the other hand.

I saw China approaching me while I struggled on the ground fighting myself. I am kicking him away. I don't want Phil to see him here.

My sight is getting blurry and dark. *Fuck*, he's trying his best in taking the control from me. I just kept resisting, though this is making me dizzy.

China pulled me up and wrapped his arms tightly around me, locking my arms on my sides. "Will you two just calm down?! You're killing yourselves!"

In a blink I made, I felt floating. All I can hear for a moment is the echoes of my breathing.

After another blink, I felt my feet back on the ground. My own mind wasn't completely back yet. I felt my body swaying. I was trying to find my balance but... I took a step on no ground.

I started falling from the cliff.

"XĪNGĀN! XĪNGĀN!"

I heard those shouts gradually getting silent before I drowned on the salty waters.

I was swimming back to the surface but I kept being distracted by Phil from holding my breath. He's still trying to choke me with the hand he has the control over. He forces my mouth to open under the water. Like literally the waters began entering my nose. ***I felt like I was about to die.***

I felt really irritated, mad and, painful by what Philip is doing to me now.

'Yes! YES, MARTIAL LAW! I AM OKAY WITH KILLING MYSELF AS LONG AS I GOT RID OF YOU! YOU'VE BECOME DISLOYAL TO ME!'

Disloyal?

I did everything and made decisions for him only. But he kept thinking negatively about them. He never understands. *Does he?*

I kept struggling in these waters.

I kept fighting back.

Until I saw a growing light that blinded me quickly.

I felt my hands heated.

My right eye is burning *hell*.

My surroundings went like X-Rays. I can only see them as black and white.

I tried swimming again, reaching for anything I can hold. ***Oh, God! Everything's getting fucking painful!*** I had reached the wood and pushed myself up. I still couldn't see anything but my senses of feeling and hearing are enough for me to know where I am.

Assumingly, I'm on a bridge.

In this state, I felt no other control over me. But, I feel like I am in danger. Philip is still around.

I remained silent and kept myself on the ground to hear who was approaching.

. . .

. . .

I am killing anyone who gets in my way.

I am the law.

No one should be above me.

Now, where are you, whoever who tries to control me?

. . .

...

...

...

I quickly turned to my back and did a finger gun. I shoot bullets to anyone detected by my vision.

I walked towards them while successfully shooting them all dead.

"DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?! I AM MARTIAL LAW! I AM HERE, SO I TAKE THE CONTROL OVER EVERYTHING! I SENSE REBELLION FROM THE PLANS I WANTED TO HAPPEN. PLANS FOR PEACE BETWEEN THIS COUNTRY TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD! THIS IS YOUR PUNISHMENT FOR FIGHTING AGAINST ME! DIE!"

Suddenly, I felt a pin buried in my neck. It quickly shuts my eyes closed and weakens my knees. After the last breath during my consciousness, I passed out.



[6:10, Philippine Time]

I felt myself lying on a soft foam, so I forced myself to open my eyes to see where I am. I tried pushing myself up but dizziness hit me hard. My head is so heavy.

I remained lying here while looking around. It's so dark here. The curtains are closed but I see sunlight behind it. I think I'm in the living room.

Who brought me here? Maybe, China. Or Phil. He must've taken over me after passing out.

But, what is this place? I know every room Phil enters, but not this.

My heart skipped a beat after hearing the *cling-clang* of the plates

from the kitchen not far from here. Somebody else is here. *Who could that be?*

"Who's there?" I asked.

"Oh! You're awake!"

Gosh! It's Kuya Del. I breathed in relief.

I heard him walk towards here. I watched him place a tray of two cups and a paper bag of... probably *pandesal*. Oh, I smell coffee.

"How are you feeling?" Kuya Del questioned me with concern.

"I'm okay now. I just couldn't sit up."

"Here. Let me help you."

Kuya Del held my shoulders and guided me to sit up carefully. I flinched and massaged my forehead when the dizziness struck again.

He handed me a cold glass. Water, I thought. I drank it anyway. I felt thirsty.

"What happened? H-How did I get here?"

He seemed to gulp before answering me. "A lot, actually. You sure, you don't remember?"

I took a minute to recall.

I can only remember light. A lot of light. And black and dark blue figures. Voices. **Gunshots**. Being breathless. Inability to move. Waters.

I don't know.

I answered, "No. I don't remember."

Kuya Del went to the sofa across mine and took his cup of coffee. He drank it and licked his lips. "I am willing to tell you what happened, **but**... let me tell you some things first. You can tell me if

my stories are making you uncomfortable. You can drink your coffee if you feel uneasy, okay?"

I looked down at the other cup on the tray. "Ooookay?" Pretty confused. What do I have to be nervous about?

"I've been preparing for this moment but still, I felt surprised."

I remained silent as I tried to guess what this might be about. Yet, I still don't understand.

Kuya Del then began the story. "Someone called me because you are shooting people in Palawan. And they're terrified of you because your... right eye was glowing brightly."

Oh. That explains the light.

"I rushed there and shot you with... with a liquid that will make you fall asleep quickly. I forgot the name. When you passed out, I was surprised you didn't have a gun with you."

"I didn't bring any guns with me. That night was actually supposed to be spent with China. But, *Philippines* got mad as fuck. He RAGED and tried to KILL ME by DROWNING ME IN THE SEA-- wait. I'm recalling things."

"That's good. Go on."

"He was trying to drown me and he said he didn't care if we died together. But... I couldn't explain the shooting I did. That's... That's out of my control."

"I told Phil before to not make you angry. Geez."

I blinked multiple times and bunched my eyebrows. "Does that mean you know the shooting will happen if I get mad?"

He looked away and drank his coffee again.

"Explain that. What happened there? What have I done?"

He held his cup with both of his hands. "You know the myth, right?

About the human with a Filipino flag that commits crime when his eye glows?"

So, it's me ?

"It's actually not a myth. It only became one because it happened once in the history of the world. The glow of someone's flag means they contributed to world peace. Many people don't believe the story as it reaches almost everyone in the world. But, *I saw it happen years ago.*"

"Tell me more."

"Please, promise me you'll calm down."

"I *can* calm myself, Del."

He nodded and drank his coffee again.

"Marcos and Phil were special in the era they were born in. They were the sons of the great Katipunan and the most beautiful Filipina, Perla. I didn't care if I was forgotten to give a spotlight too. I'm proud of them. But, many liked Phil more because he's truly an angel, they said. They even named this land after him."

"Why do they hate Marcos?"

"Uhm... I heard, though he looked like an angel too, he's a dangerous being. He's predicted to be a strong soldier of the land because he learned how to stand faster than Phil. But, he liked to hold scissors and reach knives. He didn't like the bamboo toys *papa* made for him. He laughed when he wounded his playmates. They thought he was a demon's baby. A curse."

Wow. Just wow.

"Let me ask you first. What did *mama* tell you again about Marcos?"

"Uhh. That their town was being raided by Spaniards. The house was burnt by them. They were rushing, so they forgot him in his room. He died there in the burning house."

. . .

Del drank his coffee... again.

I asked, "Why? What's with that? Isn't that true?"

"Martial, hold your coffee for me. Drink it--"

"Don't tell me what to do. I can calm myself."

"O-Okay. Sorry. Sorry."

He breathed heavily. I heard it.

He continued, "It's... It's not true... Martial..."

. . .

. . .

"What truly happened, then? Tell me what happened in full details."

"It's mama and papa's decisions to... get rid of you. They... They were afraid of y- Marcos too."

"Afraid of me?"

"No. No, Martial--"

"But, Marcos is me. Right?"

"Y-Yes. But, you're... you're not--"

"Just continue, Del. Continue."

"They--" I heard him start sobbing and struggle to talk clearly. "They p-packed their things and-- left the house wi-without Marcos. P-Papa was preparing to burn the house down--"

"What did you do about it?"

"I TRIED TO STOP THEM!"

I slammed my hands on the table and breathe rapidly in anger. I beginning to see that same light again. I shook my head to hold it.
"Don't you dare raise your voice on me."

"S-Sorry. I-- *I could've ran back there to save y-you...* I-I'm sorry. I'm sorry..."

He slid himself down on the floor to kneel down and beg, not minding his coffee spilling on his carpet. He sobbed louder there as he cried.

"I'm sorry!"

. . .

. . .

. . .

. . .

. . .

I moved the table from my way to him. I knelt down and pulled him close to me. I hugged him. Tightly. I rubbed his back to comfort him.

My tears fall too. They slid on my cheek to my lips that I taste its saltiness.

"Don't worry. I felt your sincere love for me, Kuya Del."

"P-Please... I-I'm sorry... I-I hope I didn't m-make you feel bad. I-I'm sorry for what they... did..."

. . .

. . .

You shouldn't be sorry for what they did to me. I want them to be sorry for it.

Looking back at my days with Kuya Del, he was a good brother to

me. He gave me a ride when I wanted time to clear my head. He talked to me openly. He's... close to my heart. He understands me.

He's the one who told me the painful truth. He was brave.

I recalled that he worries about what might *papa* do to him if he finds out about his sexuality.

Papa, you're motherfucking bullshit.

. . .

I thought of things to do next.

But, first. I must help Kuya Del before I leave.

I did the finger gun and pointed the tip of my finger behind his head.

"Thank you for being here for me, Kuya Del. I need you very much. I love you too. But, I don't want you to be hurt again..."

Bang!

Chapter Twenty

The Dark, Final Day of Marcos, who is the son of Katipunan and Perla, brother of Del Pilar and Philippines...

The birth of Martial Law...

- - □□◦□□-□□◦□□ - -

Oh... I've finally awoken. I've never felt this free.

They are done trying to keep me in the uncomfortable cage of their expectations. I am breaking free.

I found out I have been a monster since I was born. Even my own parents were afraid of me. *They got rid of me by letting me die in the disaster they created.* They let me cry for help. They ignored my call. I died in a literal burning house, which I thought was my home.

I can't believe it. They saw me as a bad infant... rather than as a son.

I stopped wondering why they want me to stay silent and hidden. They wanted to keep me behind to *ensure other people's safety*. If only I knew about this earlier, I would've learned to control myself, to avoid danger myself. I would've used these abilities to protect people instead. But no. They wanted me hidden.

I must enjoy this freedom. In fact, I will disappear sooner because Philip is beginning to be independent from me. Before closing my eyes for the last time, the world must know about me. That's what I've been wanting to happen. I want to be in the headlines. I want to be praised. I want to feel like I exist.

When I wore my jacket on me, currently I'm in Philip's office, I dialed China's number by phone. I leaned backwards on the table and slightly sat on it, waiting for him to answer.

"People's Republic

*of China. How can I
help you?"*

"Hi, *mahal*."

He suddenly went silent. I chuckled.

*"Y-You... S-Since,
when?! I was hearing
news y-you and Philip
died!"*

"Woah! That news
was too much. Why
would I die?"

*"Can I meet you later?
I-I was worried. I-I
can apologize to Phil
about what happened
that afternoon. I-It's
my fault."*

"I actually called to
ask for permission if
I could do my
dramatic entrance to
your office."

*"To my office? Y-You
mean--"*

"I'm heading there.
I want to go to your
place. I've never been
to any place outside
this land."

*"So, you and Phil
will--"*

"No. He's not coming

with me. Ah, I mean...
I managed to
overpower him. I don't
want him taking over.
I want to tell you more
about that once I got
there."

*"Oh. But, how about
the people? They
might see you."*

"I don't care. Doesn't
it feel more fun if
you are followed by
paparazzis?"

*"Okay... Do everything
as you wish. I'll stay
in my office waiting for
you. I missed you,
xīngán."*

"I missed you too. I
won't let you wait
for long. I'll be there
quick."

As soon as I placed the phone down, I began my *dramatic main character walk*.



[11:03 AM, Philippine Time]

I waited patiently on my seat for my helicopter to land in front of the presidential palace. Oh, God. My heart began to beat fast. This is my chance to finally step on someone else's land. For the first time in forever.

Ah. I noticed the citizens moving away from the area we took.

They're watching us. Oh! They're surprised because *what's the event for this helicopter to be here, right?* Are there any celebrations?

I wonder what they'll say about me.

My guards opened the door for me and I quickly jumped out.

I brushed my hair with my fingers. I smiled and waved to the people looking at us as I continued walking towards the palace entrance. My jacket is floating by the wind blowing at me.

This is the moment I stole this show from my brothers.

I just kept ignoring the office workers who tried to block my way. Asking me, 'Why am I here?', 'Who do I want to see?', 'Who am I?'

I have no time for them.

I have myself ready for China only.

It's better to leave them wondering who I am.

I headed up to his room.

I pushed the door open.

There he is, standing by the window.

I couldn't stop myself from smiling back at him. My arms opened wide as I got closer to China. I wrapped them around him, tightly. I felt him hugging my back. Then, I placed my hand on his face... and leaned forward to his lips to kiss him.

...

It felt like time stopped by that moment.

As if the puzzle was completed after searching for the last piece.

My love for him... seems to be here for years. It completed me. He is what I was needing. He is what my heart wants.

...

As we parted away, my hearing began to hear the noise again.

"Sir! He came here unbothered! We don't know who he is! Were you expecting him, sir?!"

"I want you all to leave us alone." I swear I said that calmly.

"You have no equal rights to our president to order us that way!"

Oh. Okay. I did the finger gun and pointed it by the wall just near the crowd. I shot. Everybody had their heads down after that. **"I said leave."**

"求你了，各位。暂时不要打扰我们。是的，我希望他能在这里。我很抱歉没有让你们都知道。不要为我担心。" China said.

I watched them all leave the room. I was thankful they obeyed him. Of course, he's the president here.

I stepped away from him and relaxed my mind.

We had a short moment of silence.

. . .

"Sorry," I started.

"Don't be. I can talk to them after. That was a beautiful entrance, by the way. Hearing about how you entered this place unbothered, I was surprised you had the guts. And confidence."

"Of course. Something gave that *lots* of confidence."

"Hm, I'm willing to listen about that."

I sighed heavily. "I might not be here anymore by tomorrow."

"You're staying here?"

"I mean, I might disappear from Philip's mind by tomorrow. We won't see each other again."

. . .

"He... He recovered from Dissociative Identity Disorder, then."

"Yes. He's okay now. I am enjoying my last minutes. I'm actually here to say goodbye to you properly."

Silence again.

. . .

I continued, "You didn't do anything wrong. Think of that. There are just... people who don't understand what we did. Yet, I admit we were careless. We would've revealed our plans to them if... we knew they would understand. But, no. They were never a family for me. They feared my potential, so they wanted to keep me silent inside Philip's mind."

"W-What potential is that you were mentioning?"

"Hm. I can kill people easily. When my eyes glow, I get overpowered. Insane. Maybe, I can make people get scared easily. I don't know. I have no idea. But, I think my parents know who I really am. They're... hiding secrets from me. And, I'll go to *papa* to find out. That's my last plan for today."

China didn't say a word.

I bowed my head. "I'm sorry if I'll leave you with all this chaos. They might run after you to know who I am."

He's still silent.

"Uhm, you can tell them everything you know about me. My name. How I look. Where I used to live. What I was doing."

"B-But, I'll still lose you."

. . .

My chest suddenly felt heavy.

"Y-Yeah... I know."

"I can't bear that. I-I can handle the interviews. The rumors about me. B-But, I can't handle the loneliness I'd feel again without you."

"Feelings pass, China--"

"Th-These feelings don't! And I don't want it to pass! This is what makes me feel alive! Nothing and nobody else gives me that!"

"Then... Then, remember me." My voice broke after the last word. "It's your choice. B-But, I don't want you to carry the pain of losing me everyday. You can forget about me. I won't be back anyway."

"I'm not saying goodbye to you. We will see each other again. I know we will. You are staying with me, as a ghost or as a memory. Whatever!"

I watched his lips shiver as he started crying. Those words must be heavy for him. I couldn't hold my tears either.

"I will stay with you if I can. You are the best person I had. Remember that, too."

He reached for my hand.

"Even if you can't go to our meeting place again, I'll still leave flowers there for you."

That had me in so much tears. "D-Don't bother."

"You might smile if you see a lot of flowers there. You'll be happy."

"Ch-China, s-s-stop that."

"I-I'll sing you wi-- with a guitar."

"Shut up..."

"I'll still go there as if you'll be there too. My love won't stop by the day you'll be gone. I know you'll still make it there."

I kept crying. I was speechless.

"O-Okay. Whenever I go, I'll... I'll never love anyone else unless

you're there too."

"Challenge of loyalty, then."

"It is."

We both laughed as I wiped my tears away.

I held his back back tightly. "Do whatever you want to do, *mahal*. Don't be bothered by anyone else."

"You're the only one I'll follow, *xingán*..."



[4:50 PM, Philippine Time]

'What's taking papa so long? Where did he go?'

I am losing my patience in waiting for my goddamn father to go home. I've been here for hours. He should be home by now.

Maybe he's grieving for Del. I heard Del's in the hospital today. Probably, they're preparing for the funeral.

My sight roamed the house. Oh, I didn't feel like missing this house. I thought of burning this down too. But, what I thought is better than that.

'I wonder what else I can do other than the finger gun. Can I make something float? Can I choke someone down by just a glare? We'll find out later.'

In the middle of my thoughts, the main door suddenly opened. And there is an old man going inside.

Pfft. You never wanted to see how shocked he is to see me sitting on the sofa. As if he saw an ugly ghost.

I stared at his eyes. Straight to his eyes.

I sensed fear from them. That is a good start.

"Please sit down," I said, pointing at the sofa across from mine.

He didn't move. I think he knew what would happen now.

"Sit."

Slowly, he approached the seat I spared for him. I can see the shaking of his fingers. What a poor old man, you are.

"How long have you been here?" he asked me almost as a whisper.

"I've been here since I was born. Was resurrected after being killed in the burning house caused by someone I know."

His eyes widened. "How-- Who told you that?"

"Someone who isn't here anymore."

. . .

I tilted my head to the side and smirked. "Why did you become silent? It's just me. **Your son**. Is there anything you have to fear about me?"

He rapidly shook his head. "N-No. *Wala...*"

"Does that someone who told me that story matters?"

"*H-Hindi...*"

"Hey, why don't you retell me about what happened to your other son? How did he die again? Oh! I mean, how did I **die**?" I jokingly said, leaning back to my seat.

"We... We told you already. The Spaniards burned the house and we couldn't find you around--"

"You didn't say you couldn't find me. You said, I was left."

"You were left in the burning house."

"**If so, why didn't you run back to get me?**"

"It's the past. We shouldn't be talking about it, Martial."

My blood's starting to boil from here.

"What if I want to?" I insisted.

"I'm not talking about it."

"Why?"

"Because it's--"

"You're avoiding something? You can't tell me what really happened?"

"I already told you that! What else do you want to know?!"

"THE TRUTH, PAPA!"

The lightbulb above us burst.

"Martial, calm down..."

"Tell me what happened to your son when you couldn't do anything to save him..."

"He-- W-We don't know!"

"He must be crying in pain. He must be calling out for you. Weren't you hurt?"

"I-I was--"

I stood up from my seat and walked slowly towards him. ***"How do you see me now? What are you gonna do with me?"***

I saw him preparing himself to run.

"RUN AND I'LL SHOOT YOU!"

"N-N-No. M-Ma-Martial, listen t-to me..."

"Are you thinking of a way to get rid of me again?! Are you

planning to get your damn bolo knife to stab at me?! What did you do to your demon son?! You tried to suppress him!"

The TV went static.

"I couldn't control it, papa. I don't know what to do with this curse..."

My sight was gradually going white.

"If only I knew about this earlier... I would stop myself... from killing you."

"Anak... 'wag-- 'wag!"

"No matter what truly happened years ago, you could still watch me die. Now, until your last breath, scream. Cry. No one will hear you. You have no son in this place. I have embraced who I really am."

I wrapped my hand around his neck... tightly... as if he's just a drinking glass for me.

"Look me in the eyes. Watch me."

He began catching his breaths.

I don't know what's happening to him either.

But, he's getting insane.

He kept struggling... as if something got inside him and it was killing him.

I tighten my grip on his neck.

Until I heard bones crack.

And fluid flow on my hand.

It was satisfying to hear. It was death. Torture, probably.

There was silence. I still couldn't see anything. I feel nothing. This is

the worst thing I have done since my existence, and I regret nothing.

. . .

I fell down on the floor. I suddenly lost my balance. My knees began to feel numb.

I couldn't move.

My breaths are echoing. I am panting.

I couldn't move my arms anymore.

My... My head's swaying.

Oh... You're taking me away now. This is my moment, I guess.

"Phil."

My last call.

I don't know what to say next after that. I am not his brother. He has no monster brother.

Ah. I know.

"Phil. You're free now."

□□ ➤ Epilogue

A|N

*I don't wanna do the court scenes. I don't know anything about that xD
This is the last happening of this book. I hope you enjoyed being here.*

♡□□□□♡

[Days later...]

MANILA PHILIPPINES

- - □□◦□□-§-□□◦□□ - -

"That wasn't me! I didn't know I got there in China ! I-It's--"

"But, the person has the same flag as you! You illegally passed our border and communicated to no one about your visit!"

"Ch-China! M-Maybe he knew--"

"Our president never wanted to interrupt in this case. He knows nothing about the trespassing you did."

Waking up... with your family's dead bodies. Waking up with people asking you questions you aren't familiar with.

"Many are in favor that you should be responsible for the people killed by Martial Law back in Palawan."

"WHO THE HECK WOULD LET A MENTAL HOSPITAL PATIENT
RULE OUR COUNTRY?!"

"Our president is still weak! His responsibilities are left behind because of
his condition!"

Waking up with a lot of accusations. Things you never did. Things
done by *a part of me*.

I've experienced being lonely. Fighting battles alone. But... this is
the worst.

I have no family left to run to.

I have no *imaginary friend* to ask for help from.

I can't escape this reality. And I am afraid of it now.

My enemies are my own people. They hate me for what *a part of me*
did.

They're millions. I am one. How will I talk to them?

I ran away.

I ran away from the ground and climbed up the hill.

The last escape I can do. This is where Martial Law felt relieved.
This place must give me relief too.

"CHINA!"

I was tired. But, I came up here for him.

"China!"

I ran close to him. He is just standing, looking at the sunset... as if
there's no chaos happening between us.

I noticed our surroundings. There are more flowers here than the
last time I got here.

"What did you come here for, Philippines?"

I suddenly lost my words. But, I kept myself up. "I--"

"Where is Martial Law?"

"I haven't talked to him since... since we had a fight here. He must've talked to you! He went to your place, right?! People are saying I'm the one who went there!"

"Yes. You're right. He went there to talk to me."

"Phew. Thank, Go--"

"He told me things which your family hid from him."

I became confused. "What?"

"He didn't tell me anything further, but I understood his point. I can't explain that to you."

"He is my brother, China! You can't know more than me!"

"But, I know more than you because he trusts me! He trusts no one among his family including you!"

Wow. Wow.

I let him continue. "I witnessed how strict you are to him. He was feeling caged. You treated him as your mental illness. Not as a brother." He turned around to face me. "Whatever Martial Law has decided, I respect that. If he didn't let you know anything, then I must do the same."

"Are you nuts, China?! Are you his dog or something?! You were never like this before!"

"Glad you noticed I changed! I changed the way of life I had! I changed for the better of our people but **you** interpreted it wrong! Fine, if you want to stay the same, then let's keep things that way."

What... What does he mean..?

"I'll remove all the support I gave to you. Rise from poverty

yourself. Prepare for my invasion."

Invasion?!

"H-Hold on, Ch-China! I-I thought you and Martial settled this!"

"Well, he's not here. And haven't you doubted me since then? You don't trust me if I become your ally. So, I'll be your enemy forever."

And he walked away, leaving me clouded with thoughts.

I put both of my hands on my head and walked in a circle.

I-I can't do this alone. I-I know what China can do to me.



[Years later...]

*"Phil, the battleships
of China are here..."*

"Hang on, I'm on my way there, Palawan."

I think China and I can talk this out. I am almost done fixing my relationship to my fellow Filipinos. A war came next. I'm not that prepared yet. I haven't asked many countries for help. Battleships, you say, sound really scary.

As soon as my helicopter landed, I ran quickly to the port. Fishermen and Palawan were looking up to the incoming large ships.

The size suffocates me. I never had anything against those. Thankfully, my navy is alert too. They're here but holding fire.

My eyes narrowed when I saw a person walking to the edge of the ship's deck. He's wearing a white navy uniform as I see. Probably, China's spokesperson.

Oh.

Oh, shit.

Isn't that my flag?!

I blinked multiple times to clear my vision. I blocked the sunlight coming to my sight to see the man clearer.

Oh... shit.

This... can't... be...

"GREETINGS, FILIPINOS! THANK YOU FOR WELCOMEING US TO YOUR LAND!"

His voice escaped the speakers in the ship. I couldn't believe... I'd hear his voice again. The voice that used to be in my head.

Palawan, who's standing beside me, poked my arm. "I-Isn't that Martial Law? I-I thought he was your alter. Why is he up there?"

"Don't ask me, Palawan. I-I don't know either."

"I HAVE COME HERE TO TAKE A VISIT! MAY I PARK MY SHIP HERE?!"

That sounds ridiculous.

"WHO ARE YOU?! WHY DO YOU LOOK LIKE US?!" Palawan shouted by the megaphone.

"*TRAITOR! TRAITOR!*" said the people behind us.

"OH! RIGHT! I FORGOT TO INTRODUCE MYSELF! **MY NAME IS MARTIAL LAW! I WORK FOR BEIJING CHINA!**"

Martial... works... for China?

Author's Note

(*breathes in)

HI! Your Onee-sama Uschanka here!

I wrote the last chapter and the epilogue quickly. Yes, I rushed it because I know I'll never have any other days to write it.

You guys are amazing. You gave me surprises which fueled my hands to do this book. Thank you all for coming along with me. I'm happy I made friends with youuuuuu hihi.

Thank you for the interactions, comments, and votes. I appreciate all that. If only my mom knew I'm getting reads and votes... she'd be proud we went this far.

I love you all.

As a reward, I'm opening another QnA for the characters who existed in this book.

Kati: I died brutally. I can't believe it.

Del: Yeah, dad. That's worse than being shot in the head.

Martial, crying: I'M SORRY! WE TOOK THAT SCENE FOR A LOT OF TIMES! I CAN'T STOP CRYING AT IT!

Martial. I paid you twice for that scene.

Anyways...

I know you guys know, I have a third book ready for this series. It is entitled "**NEVER Again**". I'm telling you all, I'm not writing it *agad*.

I'll be off this account because I have another book to write that is outside the countryhumans fandom. BUT, I'm still a fan. I could be a fan forever. I love countryhumans more than I love myself.

My hiatus, if that's what you call it, might last for 5-6 months or maybe, a year. But, I promise I'll be back.

I actually don't know what the moral lesson of this story is
HAHAHAHAHAHA Just don't do anything stupid in your life.

: "((

I'm gonna miss you all.

Don't worry. I'll come visit this account so I can reply to your comments!

Any last words, my dear characters?

Martial: I will be back!

Kati: I think this is the worst death I had. I still couldn't move on from what happened.

Norea: Kids, this is a fantasy story. I and Sorea will never be friends again.

Sorea: >: "((

Phil: Nope. I have no words. I'm okay.

China: It feels hard to go back to your old self once you change to a better one. I don't feel like being evil anymore. Do I need help?

Kati: Yes.

China: I see. But, may I have Martial Law, sir?

Kati: You maaaaaaaay. But, don't make us feel he's miles away from us. We love that kid.

Martial: YAY!!

Phil: Imagine our family fighting in this book but we still love each other behind the scenes.

OI! OI! ENOUGH NA! I HAVE TO LEAVE NA!

LET'S SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN, GUYS!! MWAAA LOVE YOU ALL!!

NEVER Again - UCFTP Book 3 IS OUT!

[image] [image]

HIII!! EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THAT I AM BACK **AFTER A YEAR!**

Yesterday, I published the beginning of everything for the Book 3. I encourage you all to check it out **right now** because the wait is finally over!

I hope you'll love the finale as much as you loved the books before this. Thank you thank you so much for being with me. You guys made my life here in this fandom so so good!

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE GO ASK IT KSBSJSNS I MISS Y'ALL NGL